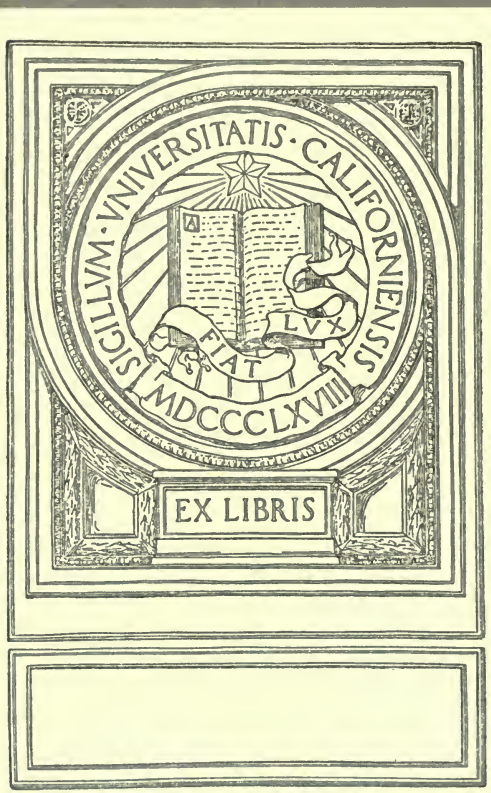
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THE WESSEX OF THOMAS HARDY

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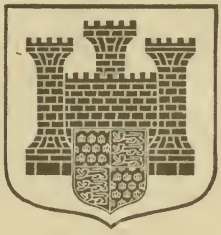
CASTERBRIDGE FROM THE LONDON ROAD

THE WESSEX OF THOMAS HARDY

Written by
BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE, F.R.S., F.S.A.
Illustrated by
EDMUND H. NEW



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To

THE ONLIE BEGETTER OF THIS WESSEX

THOMAS HARDY

THESE

250587

PREFACE

SOME ten or more years ago the writer of these pages, who had been for a much longer period an admirer of Mr. Hardy's novels, commenced, as a purely private and personal pastime, the exploration of Wessex, with the object of finding out for himself the localities of the tales. This task, undertaken in the days when there were no "Wessex Maps" to assist the investigator, lent an added zest to many a holiday. At last, through articles in papers, through books, and through other channels, the writer began to learn that other persons were interested in the same pursuit as himself. Later on it fell to his lot to have the privilege of editing a new issue of a well-known Handbook dealing with Wessex, and whilst carrying out this task he accumulated a mass of information about Wessex, its people, its customs, and its novels, which, it seemed, might be of use to other students of Mr. Hardy's works. It was his great good fortune to discover that his friend Mr. New had

long cherished the design of issuing a series of drawings of a district which he, too, had learnt to love from the perusal of the Wessex novels. It seemed that the intentions of both might be carried out by a book such as this—a book which its writer most humbly admits would have lost the larger share of such attractions as it may possess had it appeared without Mr. New's charming pictures of the places with which it is concerned. It was obviously possible to take the country as the basis, and deal with the incidents of the novels as each place was visited, or to consider the novels *seriatim*, sketching the topography of each separately. The latter plan seemed to involve too much repetition, and it was, therefore, decided to adopt the former. In the concluding chapters of the book, however, a *résumé* of the topography of each novel has been given in completion of the scheme of treatment.

For obvious reasons, the writer has desired to take his readers to the scenes of the novels, and, when arrived there, to allow Mr. Hardy to describe them himself. Thus the pictures which he has given in his books have been freely quoted here. Of the unquoted remainder, the writer can only say to those readers who are unacquainted with the novels, if any such he may chance to have, *Pulchra quæ videntur, longè pulcherrima quæ ignorantur.* Various books and papers on the subject of the

Preface

Wessex novels have been consulted, and here the writer has to express his regret that, owing to some strange accident, the charming little book of Miss Macdonnell on Thomas Hardy did not come into his hands until these pages were actually written. Had it done so earlier, he would have been saved several fruitless expeditions. But he has preferred to trust to his own observations rather than to books, and has personally visited every place of which he has written, with one insignificant and exceedingly out-of-the-way exception. He has to thank Mr. Moule, the courteous and learned curator of the Dorset County Museum, for kind assistance; but above all, the writer and the illustrator of this book have to express their acknowledgments to the author of the Wessex novels for the kindness which he has shown them, and for the sympathy which he has exhibited in their work. Without Mr. Hardy's generous assistance, these pages must have been much less complete than it is hoped they will be found to be. Nor, without the same generous assistance, would the writer have been able to speak with such certainty as to the identification of certain of the spots.

B. C. A. W.

Weatherbury, Harborne,
July 30, 1901.

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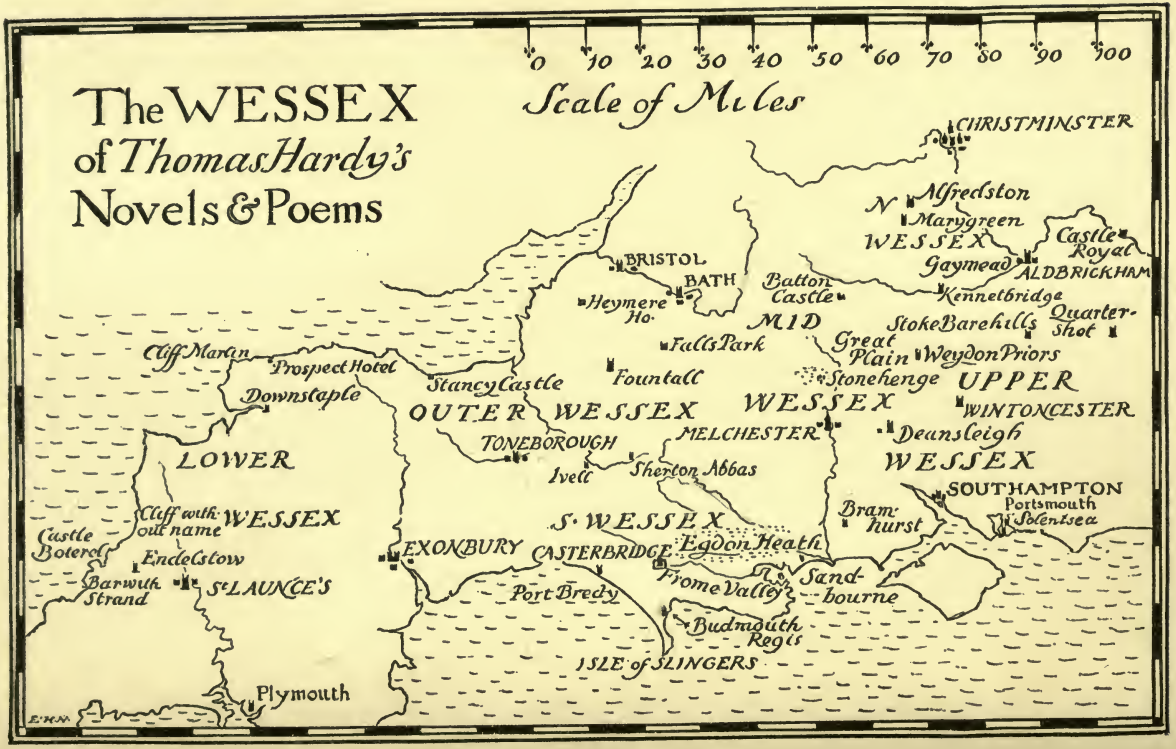
The WESSEX of Thomas Hardy's Novels & Poems
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Scale of Miles
CHRISTMINSTER
N
Alfredston
Marygreen
WESSEX
Castle Royal
Gaymead
ALDBRICKHAM
Batton Castle
Kennetbridge
BRISTOL
BATH
Heymere Ho.
MID
Stoke Barehills
Quarter-Shot
Great Plain
Weydon Priors
Falls Park
Cliff Marin
Prospect Hotel
Stancy Castle
Fountall
Stonehenge
UPPER
Downstaple
OUTER WESSEX
WESSEX
WINTONCESTER
MELCHESTER
Deansleigh
TONEBOROUGH
LOWER
Ivell
Sherton Abbas
WESSEX
SOUTHAMPTON
Portsmouth
Solentsea
Cliff with out name
WESSEX
S. WESSEX
Bram hurst
Castle Boterel
EXONBURY
CASTERBRIDGE
Egdon Heath
Endelstow
Frome Valley
Sand-bourne
Barwith Strand
St LAUNCE'S
Port Bredy
Budmouth Regis
ISLE of SLINGERS
Plymouth
E. H. N.

THE WESSEX OF THOMAS HARDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

WHILST Thackeray was engaged upon his story "The Virginians," he confided to Motley that "he intended to write a novel of the time of Henry V., which would be his *capo d'opera*, in which the ancestors of all his present characters, Warringtons, Pendennises, and the rest, should be introduced. It would be a most magnificent performance," he said, "and nobody would read it." This idea, which was probably never seriously entertained and certainly never was realized, would, had it been carried out, have been quite in harmony with Thackeray's plan of linking novel to novel by a use, if not always of identical characters in successive books, at least of members of the same family. The genealogist can easily trace the family tree of the Esmond Warringtons from "Henry Poyns,

gent., who married Dorothea, daughter and heiress of Edward, Earl and Marquis Esmond, and Lord of Castlewood," through the Georgian Esmonds and Warringtons, down to "the Stunner," friend and mentor of Pendennis—of Pendennis, who is himself the hero of one novel, the putative author of another, and a prominent figure in a third. Then, again, amongst minor personages, there is Voelcker or Foker the brewer, whose son was pupil to George Warrington, of "The Virginians," and whose better-known descendant Harry Foker appears in "Pendennis" to frustrate on two occasions the love-affairs of the young gentleman after whom the book is named. Such a plan of welding into one organic whole what would otherwise be the isolated efforts of a novelist's imagination, imparts without doubt a considerable air of verisimilitude to the series. It was not, of course, the sole property of the greatest of this century's novelists, but has been employed by other writers, and notably by Zola in his Rougon-Macquart memoirs. Mr. Hardy himself has used it to some extent, for the name of William Dewey, that fine old man, of whom his author seems to be particularly fond, occurs in several of the novels, whilst in "The Mayor of Casterbridge" mention is made of James Everdene, the uncle from whom Bathsheba, of "Far from the Madding Crowd," inherited her farm, and of Boldwood, then "a silent, reserved young man," as figuring amongst the creditors of the unfortunate Henchard. But Mr.

Hardy has his own plan for binding together the links of his chain of tales—a different plan from that of Thackeray, but not less effectual. The former may perhaps be spoken of as the method of genealogical, the latter of scenic continuity. For Mr. Hardy has annexed unto himself a small—a relatively small—stretch of country, and has steadily, in novel after novel, proceeded to people it with a new population, a population which never had any existence outside the dreamland of its creator's thoughts, but a population made so real to us by his genius, that the pilgrim through Wessex can scarcely bring himself to believe that Bathsheba and Oak, Dick Dewey and his wife Fancy, with all the other characters which pass before the inner eye when one thinks of the Wessex novels, might not be perceptible to the ordinary senses, were it possible to pierce the veil which, it seems, must hide them as one strolls through the little country towns and villages to which they belong. The late William Morris once said that we must no more expect to see the rustics of Hardy than those of Mason and Walker, both being ideal creations without actual existence; yet how much more real are they to many of us than those flesh-and-blood rustics with whom it may have been our fate to have been brought in contact! Whilst peopling these scenes with the creatures of his imagination, Mr. Hardy has achieved a feat which he was probably far from contemplating when he first commenced his series of

novels. For incidentally he has resuscitated, one may even say re-created, the old half-forgotten kingdom of Wessex. Before his time, those who used this term at all were thinking of a land made memorable by the ravages of a horde of sea-borne adventurers, who gradually drove before them, in conflict after conflict of those "battles of kites and crows" of which Milton scornfully spoke, the earlier possessors of the country-side. It was the land which later was ruled over by Ine, the law-giver, the founder of Taunton, the land of Ælfred, greatest and wisest of early kings. But Wessex as a living, breathing reality, Wessex as a part of nineteenth-century life, sprang first into existence under the touch of the magic wand of its novelist. In the introduction to the last edition of "Far from the Madding Crowd," its author, reminding himself and his readers that it was in its pages that he first made use of the ancient name of Wessex in the sense in which he has made us understand it, explains the reasons which led him to make choice of that title.

"The series of novels I projected," he writes, "being mainly of the kind called local, they seemed to require a territorial definition of some sort to lend unity to their scene. Finding that the area of a single county did not afford a canvas large enough for this purpose, and that there were objections to an invented name, I disinterred the old one. The press and the public were kind enough to welcome

the fanciful plan, and willingly joined me in the anachronism of imagining a Wessex population living under Queen Victoria—a modern Wessex of railways, the penny post, mowing and reaping machines, union workhouses, labourers who could read and write, and National School children. But I believe I am correct in stating that, until the existence of this contemporaneous Wessex was announced in the present story, in 1874, it had never been heard of, and that the expression, 'a Wessex peasant,' or 'a Wessex custom,' would theretofore have been taken to refer to nothing later in date than the Norman Conquest. . . . Since then the appellation which I had thought to reserve to the horizons and landscapes of a merely realistic dream-country, has become more and more popular as a practical provincial definition ; and the dream-country has, by degrees, solidified into a utilitarian region which people can go to, take a house in, and write to the papers from."

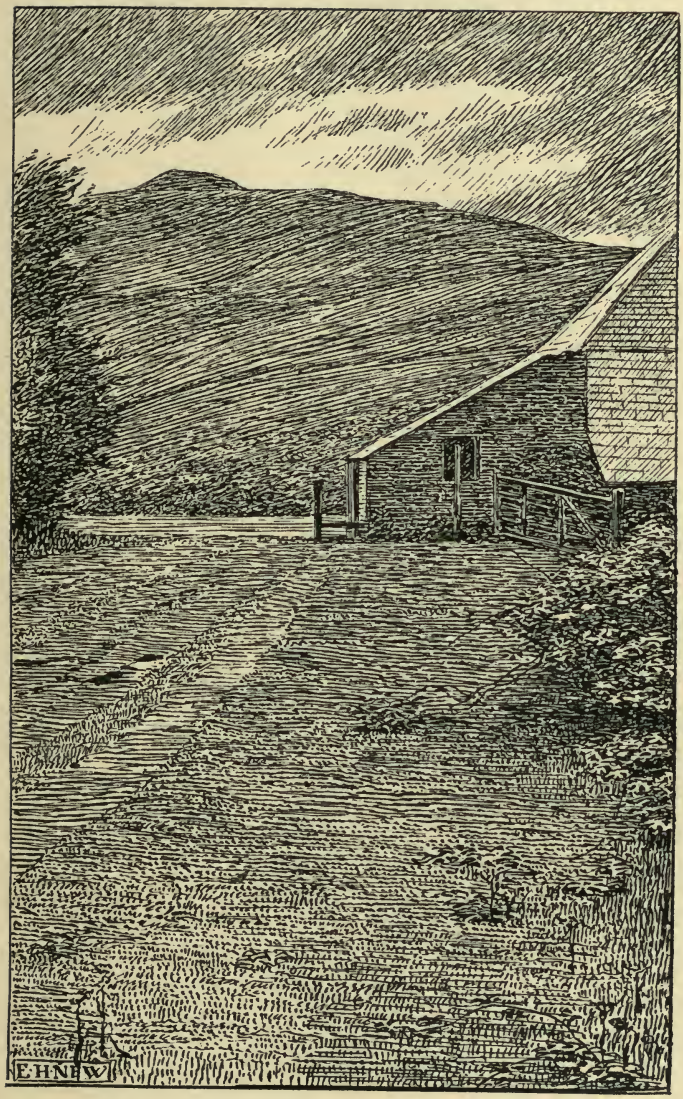
This feat, the re-creation of an old territory, Mr. Hardy has achieved as much by his marvellous powers of describing natural objects and scenery, as by his skill in delineating rustic character. Indeed, it is chiefly by the former great and excellent gift that the deed has been done. Others can draw character, even rustic character—might not Master Gammon occupy a place on the line in any gallery of British yokels ?—but who is Mr. Hardy's rival in description of nature ? Here those who believe in him as

one of the great masters in the art of fiction may take their stand and fear the attack of no opponent.

The knowledge of rustic character must not be left out of count, though it is no part of the purpose of this book to dwell upon that aspect of the question, nor must the way in which the characters belong to and form the complement of their environment be forgotten. Can any reader fail to recognize that Marty South and Giles Winterborne would have been impossible elsewhere than in the regions of Little Hintock; or can he ramble over Egdon Heath without being constrained to feel that it has existed from ages long gone by, in order to form a setting for that noble tale, "The Return of the Native"?

It is the opinion of some of those who have written on the Wessex novels that the thin veil which the author has cast over the localities which he describes should not be lifted, and that readers do better to remain in ignorance of the actual scenes, contenting themselves with the descriptions to be found within the pages of the books.

Such is not the experience of the present writer, nor is it that of other lovers of the novels in whose company he has explored the district with which they deal, for he and they have learnt how much a knowledge of the country helps the reader to appreciate and realize the stories. Those who desire to follow in this path will, it is hoped and believed, find in these pages a guide, which will enable them to trace the scenes described in the novels, and visit the



RAINBARROW.

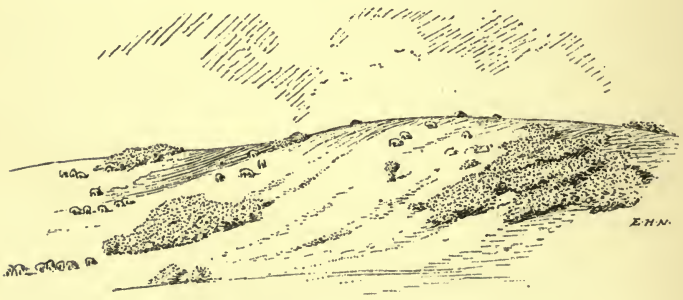
CALIFORNIA

houses in which his characters have played their parts in the comedy or tragedy of life.

Mr. Hardy has himself given some account of the method on which his topographical scheme was worked out—an account which may be quoted here before any comment is made upon it. In the introduction to the last edition of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" he tells us, "In response to inquiries from readers interested in landscape, prehistoric antiquities, and especially Old English architecture, it may be said that the description of these backgrounds in this and its companion novels has been drawn from the real. Many features of the first two kinds have been given under their existing names; for instance, the Vale of Blackmore or Blakemore, Hambledown Hill, Bulbarrow, Nettlecomb Tout, Dogbury Hill, High Stoy, Bubb-Down Hill, The Devil's Kitchen, Cross-in-Hand, Long-Ash Lane, Benvill Lane, Giant's Hill, Crimmercrock Lane, and Stonehenge. The rivers Froom or Frome and Stour are, of course, well known as such. And in planning the stories, the idea was that large towns and points tending to mark the outline of Wessex, such as Bath, Plymouth, The Start, Portland Bill, Southampton, etc., should be named outright. The scheme was not greatly elaborated, but, whatever its value, the names remain still. In respect of places described under fictitious or ancient names—for reasons that seemed good at the time of writing—discerning

persons have affirmed in print that they clearly recognize the originals ;" and then follows a list, which need not be reproduced here, terminating with the observation, "I shall not be the one to contradict them : I accept their statements as at least an indication of their real and kindly interest in the scenes."

In visiting the localities associated with the novels, it must ever be borne in mind that Mr. Hardy is a



SHEEP-DOWN NEAR WEATHERBURY.

story-writer and not a guide-book maker, an artist and not a photographer. *Il prend son bien ou il le trouve ;* and if he fails to find, in the village in which the scene of his story is laid, some adequate house for its centrepiece, he does not scruple to import one which falls in with his idea and the needs of the story from a greater or less distance. Thus the house from which the description of Bathsheba's farm is taken is not to be found in Puddletown, the

Weatherbury of "Far from the Madding Crowd," but at a spot some two miles distant from that place; and Great Hintock House, Mrs. Charmond's residence, is not in the country of "The Woodlanders," but in quite another part of the county. Again, some places are of the nature of composite pictures, such as the Tower in "Two on a Tower," which has features borrowed, as Mr. Hardy himself has pointed out in the introduction to the last edition of that novel, from two of the several obelisks and towers which are to be found in the county of Dorset. But in every case—or in almost every case—the houses described are real edifices, whether they occupy the sites allotted to them in the novels or not, and are drawn for us, as a general rule, with that architectural accuracy which Mr. Hardy's early studies in that profession have enabled him to impart to them. With regard to natural scenery the case is different. Here the descriptions paint for us the scenes as they are, and as we should wish to describe them, when we see them, were we endowed with the pen of a master. Instances of this may be found in the pictures of the Vale of Blackmore, the valley of the Frome as seen by Tess on her way to Talbothays, and the various accounts of Egdon Heath.

In certain cases Mr. Hardy has given an easy clue to the place which he had in his mind when writing, by transferring the name of the locality to his hero or some other character in the book. Thus Fawley, Jude's surname, is the real name of the

village which figures in the book as Marygreen; Melbury, the timber-merchant of "The Woodlanders," takes his name from the real appellation of one of the Hintocks; and Phillotson's friend and fellow-schoolmaster, Gillingham, is called after the place in which he taught, the Leddenton of the tale.

True to his devotion to Wessex, the names of many, perhaps of most, of Mr. Hardy's characters—to diverge for a moment into a bypath—are taken from the names of villages in the district, or will be found on tombstones, over shop-doors, or in pedigrees belonging to the same region. Thus the Chickerells are villages near Weymouth; the name of Tullidge, that hero who "fout at Valenciën," and showed his ruined arm to Maidy Anne in "The Trumpet-Major," is on a tombstone at Abbotsbury; Derriman presides over a shop at Cerne Abbas; and Keyte finds a place in the pedigree of those descended from the old Jerseyman, Thomas Hardy, of whose stock are the novelist and that other celebrated Thomas Hardy, who sailed the ship which carried Nelson to death and glory at Trafalgar.

The visitor to Dorsetshire, who knows his Wessex novels, will constantly be struck with the small touches betraying the intimate knowledge which its novelist possesses of his country. Many of these will be alluded to in subsequent pages, and one only need here be mentioned as an example. It will be remembered that Tess, on her journey to

Marlott, after her betrayal by Stoke-D'Urberville, met with a man whose simple method of evangelization was to paint texts, mostly of a denunciatory character, on the top bars of gates and stiles and other such places. Many such inscriptions may be

STILE NEAR MELLSTOCK.

found in the country around Dorchester, though the present writer, with a fair knowledge of rural England, has never come across them elsewhere. Thus, on a stile near Stinsford, as Mr. New shows in his picture, is inscribed, "SPEAK EVIL OF NO MAN;"

and on a gate near Maiden Newton—one of several inscriptions in that part of the world—is, "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD."

A general summary of the larger areas of Wessex may now be given, and we shall then be free to pass to the more particular consideration of the several localities.

Dorsetshire, in which the scene of by far the greater number of the novels is laid, is called "South Wessex;" Somerset, "Outer or Nether Wessex;" Devon (and with it might perhaps be included Cornwall), "Lower Wessex;" Wilts, "Mid-Wessex;" and Berks, "North Wessex."

CASTERBRIDGE, FROM THE WEATHERBURY ROAD.

CHAPTER II

CASTERBRIDGE

DORCHESTER, called *villa regalis* in Athelstan's charter to Milton Abbey, in order to distinguish it from its namesake of Oxfordshire, the *villa episcopalis*, is the centre and heart of Wessex, and the best place with which to commence its study. In spite of its modern appearance, the causes of which will be shortly discussed, it is a place of hoary antiquity, whose history reaches back beyond the days of Roman Britain to that Celtic period, as to which so much is surmise, so little ascertained fact. One thing seems tolerably clear, that the early history of Dorchester is inseparably connected with that of the two great earthworks in its neighbourhood, Maiden Castle and Poundbury or Pommery. Of the former, more will have to be said in a later

chapter ; for the present let it suffice that it is a huge triple-ramparted oval earthwork, two or three miles out from Dorchester on the Weymouth road. Earlier antiquaries have considered it to be of British origin—an opinion which is probably correct, though there can be no doubt that it was modified and occupied by the Romans. It must have been an important city in its day, and it seems to be far from improbable that it was the Dunium spoken of by Ptolemy, the celebrated astronomer and geographer, who flourished in Alexandria A.D. 139. Poundbury, the "square Pummerie" of "My Cicely," and the spot where the Mayor of Casterbridge designed his ill-fated out-of-door entertainment, is much nearer to Dorchester, and has been assigned by different authorities to a British, a Roman, and a Danish origin. The last of these hypotheses may with some certainty be dismissed, and the two former may both be true in the same sense that they are of Maiden Castle. In any case the British predecessor of Dorchester, whether one of these earthworks or one occupying the actual site of the present town, was a place of importance, the chief town of the Durotriges, and possessed of a name which is believed to have been Dwrinwyr. When the Romans took possession of the district they Latinized this name into the word Durnovaria, and with the name they imparted to it that indelible structural stamp of their occupation which it bears to this day.

Map of CASTERBRIDGE

E.H.N.

Casterbridge

"Casterbridge," says Mr. Hardy, "announced old Rome in every street, alley, and precinct. It looked Roman, bespoke the art of Rome, concealed dead men of Rome. It was impossible to dig more than a foot or two deep about the town fields and gardens without coming upon some tall soldier or other of the Empire, who had lain there in his silent unobtrusive rest for a space of fifteen hundred years. He was mostly found lying on his side, in an oval scoop in the chalk, like a chicken in its shell; his knees drawn up to his chest; sometimes with the remains of his spear against his arm; a fibula or brooch of bronze on his breast or forehead; an urn at his knees, a jar at his throat, a bottle at his mouth; and mystified conjecture poring down upon him from the eyes of Casterbridge street boys and men, who had turned a moment to gaze at the familiar spectacle as they passed by."

To diverge for a moment from the history of Dorchester, it is interesting to note that the description just quoted corresponds with, perhaps was suggested by, a discovery made when the foundations of Mr. Hardy's house near Dorchester were being excavated—a discovery of which he wrote thus in the *Dorchester Chronicle* of the time: "In two of the graves, and, I believe, in the third, a body lay on its right side, the knees being drawn up to the chest, and the arm extended straight downwards so that the hand rested against the ankles. Each body was

fitted with, one may almost say, perfect accuracy into the oval hole, the crown of the head touching the maiden chalk at one end and the toes at the other, the tight-fitting situation being strongly suggestive of the chicken in the egg-shell."

Roman Dorchester was surrounded by a wall, of which a small piece still remains on the west side at the top of High West Street. A large part of the remainder survived until 1762, when much of it was pulled down, the destruction of what was left following in 1802. But the lines of the wall are marked out, and their loss rendered the less serious by the delightful avenues of trees which replace them, and give to Dorchester a unique beauty amongst English towns. The aptness of the simile is now somewhat destroyed by the springing up of numerous new houses outside the limits of the ancient fortifications, but it cannot have been very long since Elizabeth Jane's remark that it was "huddled all together, and shut in by a square wall of trees, like a plot of garden ground by a box-edging," was still a faithful description of Casterbridge. These delightful walks, the trees of which were mostly planted in 1700 and 1712, are associated with an episode in "The Mayor of Casterbridge;" for Farfrae's dance was given in that which extends to the left from the top of High West Street, and faces the pretty public garden of which the town has recently become the possessor.

But a far more remarkable memento of the

Roman occupation than even the traces of the walls is Maumbury, the amphitheatre just outside the town, on the Weymouth road, the

> "Cirque of the Gladiators,
> That haggard mark of Imperial Rome,
> Whose Pagan echoes mock the chime
> Of our Christian time."

Standing on the bank of this, one feels, as Stevenson puts it of Stalbridge, also a Dorset town, that one would scarcely be surprised "to see a centurion coming up the street with a fatigue draft of legionaries," and is irresistibly driven to wonder, as Mr. Hardy has done, in a little-known passage, what the Roman city may have looked like in the days of its glory. "Standing," he says, "on the rising ground near where the South-Western Station is at present, or at the top of Slyer's Lane, or on any other commanding point, we may ask what kind of object did Dorchester—the living Durnovaria of fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago—then form in the summer landscape as viewed from such a point; where stood the large buildings; where the small; how did the roofs group themselves; what were the gardens like, if any; what social character had the streets; what were the customary noises; what sort of exterior was exhibited by these hybrid Romano-British people, apart from the soldiery? Were the passengers up and down the ways few in number, or did they ever form a busy throng such as we now

see on a market-day ?" During the Saxon period, when it was known as Dorn-wara-ceaster, it was of sufficient importance to be the seat of a mint, one of four in the county ; but after that time until the period of the Great Rebellion, there is nothing which need detain us in connection with its history. Clarendon says that when this broke out "a place more entirely disaffected to the King England had not"—a fact which may perhaps have been due to the proximity of the Trenchards of Wolfeton, so much mixed up with the siege of Corfe Castle.

Still later the town found itself, to its misfortune, concerned in another rebellion, that of Monmouth. "'Tis recorded in history," said Buzzford to his cronies of the Three Mariners, "that we rebelled against the King one or two hundred years ago, in the time of the Romans, and that lots of us was hanged on Gallows Hill, and quartered, and our different jints sent about the country like butcher's meat ; and, for my part, I can well believe it." The memory of Jeffreys and his Bloody Assize, thus recalled by Buzzford with questionable chronological accuracy, is still existent in Dorchester, where the house in which he is said to have lodged in High West Street bears an inscription commemorative of its former occupant, and the chair from which he fulminated at, bullied, and finally dismissed to the gallows his unfortunate victims still remains in the Town Hall. His picture, the portrait of a rubicund, sensual man, hangs in the Museum, and is said to have been painted

by Lely. "The court," says Macaulay, speaking of the Bloody Assize, "was hung with scarlet, and this innovation seemed to the multitude to indicate a bloody purpose. It was also rumoured that when the clergyman, who had preached the Assize Sermon, enforced the duty of mercy, the ferocious mouth of the judge was disturbed by an ominous grin. These things made men augur ill of what was to follow. More than three hundred prisoners were to be tried. The work seemed heavy; but Jeffreys had a contrivance for making it light. He let it be understood that the only chance of obtaining pardon or respite was to plead guilty. Twenty-nine persons, who put themselves on their country and were convicted, were ordered to be tied up without delay. The remaining prisoners pleaded guilty by scores. Two hundred and ninety-two received sentence of death. The whole number hanged in Dorsetshire was ninety-four." Twelve of these were executed at Weymouth, and the account of the method of disposal of their remains gives a ghastly picture of the customs of the day, and shows that Mr. Buzzford did not exaggerate when he said that the "jints were sent about the country like butcher's meat."

In the archives of the Corporation of that seaside town it is recorded that, in accordance with the sheriff's instructions, "the gallowes shall be made and erected on or neere Greenehill in the confines of this borough. Twelve persons being executed on the gallowes erected, their heads and quarters were

disposed of by the maior according to the sheriff's precept to him directed, as followeth :—

" To Upway 4 qts. and 1 head.
To Sutton Points 2 qts. and 1 head.
To Osmington 4 qts. and 1 head.
To Preston 2 qts.
To Weeke 2 qts.
To Winfrith 4 qts. and 1 head.
To Broadmaine 2 qts. and 1 head.
To Radipoll 2 qts.
To Winterborne St. Martin 2 qts.
To Puddletowne 4 qts. and 1 head.
To Bincombe 2 qts.
32 qts.* and 6 heads."

The rest of the quarters and heads were sett up in this towne at the places followinge :

" 6 qts. 1 head at the grand Piere.
2 qts. at Waymouth town's end.
4 qts. 1 head neere the Windmill.
2 qts. at Waymouth Townehall.
1 qtr. 2 heads on the Bridge.
1 qtr. 2 heads at Melcombe Townehall.
16 qts. 6 heads."

There can be no doubt that the *disjecta membra* of those who suffered the extreme penalty of the law as dispensed by Jeffreys at Dorchester were equally disseminated over the country-side.

With so ancient a history, the visitor to Dorchester may well ask himself, with some natural disappointment, why the town itself is so exasperatingly modern in appearance, for modern it is to

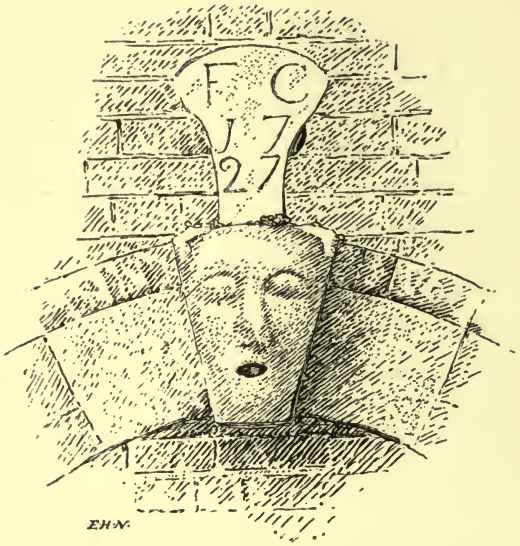
* Thus Hutchins has it.

an almost depressing extent. The answer is largely to be found in the fact that it has suffered from severe fires, all of which must have destroyed many ancient houses. One of these occurred in 1613, on the 6th of August, and originated in a tallow-chandler's shop, where too large a fire had been kindled under a cauldron in which tallow was being melted. It is said to have destroyed the whole town except St. Peter's Church and a few houses near it, and the loss which it caused is estimated as having amounted to £200,000. Another fire which destroyed many houses raged in 1715. But the town has also suffered in later times from a rage for improvement, which, however commendable in the citizens, is none the less distressing to the antiquary and the lover of the picturesque. The county history relates that "in 1776 an Act of Parliament was passed for paving, watching and lighting the town; and since that time it has been considerably improved; many new and handsome houses have been built, and other improvements introduced by private persons as well as by the Corporation. The entrance into the town from the causeway at the east end was also soon afterwards greatly beautified by taking down part of the White Hart Inn, which projected into the street, and widening the bridge." In Hutchins's time, some houses before St. Peter's Church and the south aisle of Trinity Church projected too far into the west street. "Two or three of these houses about 1790 were purchased by a

few public-spirited individuals, and taken down—an example worthy to be followed by those who wish to see the county town take the lead in every improvement that may contribute to the convenience and advantage of the public. At the angle, where the south and east streets join, two houses formerly stood near together, and a room or two belonging to them were built over the street, and made a narrow and inconvenient passage. This place was called The Bow, and was pulled down in the year 1748, which opened the view of the streets." We must regret the disappearance of these old houses, as we regret the more recent loss of the avenue of trees which adorned the entrance of the town from the London Road, and made such a fitting frame for this the most attractive view of Dorchester, with its steeply rising main street, its towers and spires, especially as thrown into relief by the rays of the westering sun.

One other change which Dorchester, in common with many other county towns, has undergone, must not be allowed to pass unnoticed. The visitor to Shrewsbury—to select a good example—can scarcely fail to be struck with the number of fine old houses in that town, which, in the days of their glory, were the town residences of the county families around. These families annually had a "season" in Shrewsbury, as now the wealthier of them do in London. Moreover, a study of the lists of the members of the Corporation at the end of the last century will show

that the heads of these families took an active interest in the prosperity of their county town by accepting office as aldermen and town councillors. Such was also the case in Dorchester, which had its own "season," when the country houses of the neighbouring gentry were deserted for those in the town, and balls and routs enlivened the dulness of provincial life. The change to the condition which obtains in our own days was perhaps inevitable, but is none the less to be regretted.



MASK OVER THE BACK DOOR OF LUCETTA'S HOUSE.

CHAPTER III

CASTERBRIDGE—*continued*

THE visitor to Dorchester who arrives by train will find himself, by whichever line he travels, in near proximity to the Roman amphitheatre, locally known as Maumbury. Indeed, this proximity came near to being its destruction, for one of the railway companies had made arrangements to demolish the earthwork, one of the half-dozen most striking relics of the Roman occupation in this country, and was only prevented from

MAUMBURY.

carrying out its Vandal purpose by the strenuous efforts of a few local antiquaries. Thanks to the labours of these gentlemen, we are still able to study one of the finest specimens of the Roman place of amusement, not only in England, but in the whole of Europe. For though it is not constructed of masonry, as are those of Italy and France, it surpasses several of them in size, and is very much larger than the others of its own class at Silchester, Cirencester, and elsewhere. In the "Mayor of Casterbridge" it is described as "a huge circular enclosure, with a notch at opposite extremities of its diameter north and south. From its sloping internal form it might have been called the spittoon of the Jotuns. It was to Casterbridge what the ruined Coliseum is to modern Rome, and was nearly of the same magnitude. The dusk of evening was the proper hour at which a true impression of this suggestive place could be received. Standing in the middle of the arena at that time there by degrees became apparent its real vastness, which a cursory view from the summit at noonday was apt to obscure. Melancholy, impressive, lonely, yet accessible from every part of the town, the historic circle was the frequent spot for appointments of a furtive kind. Intrigues were arranged there; tentative meetings were there experimented after divisions and feuds. But one kind of appointment—in itself the most common of any—seldom had place in the amphitheatre: that of happy lovers.

"Why, seeing that it was pre-eminently an airy, accessible, and sequestered spot for interviews, the cheerfullest form of those occurrences never took kindly to the soil of the ruin, would be a curious inquiry. Perhaps it was because its associations had about them something sinister. Its history proved that. Apart from the sanguinary nature of the games originally played therein, such incidents attached to its past as these: that for scores of years the town-gallows had stood at one corner; that in 1705 a woman who had murdered her husband was half strangled and then burnt there in the presence of ten thousand spectators. Some old people said that at certain moments in the summer time, in broad daylight, persons sitting with a book, or dozing in the arena, had, on lifting their eyes, beheld the slopes lined with a gazing legion of Hadrian's soldiery, as if watching the gladiatorial combat, and had heard the roar of their excited voices; that the scene would remain but a moment, like a lightning flash, and then disappear. It was related that there still remained under the south entrance arched cells for the reception of the wild animals and athletes who took part in the games. The arena was still smooth and circular, as if used for its original purpose not so very long ago. The sloping pathways by which spectators had ascended to their seats were pathways yet. But the whole was grown over with grass, which, at the end of summer, was bearded with withered bents that

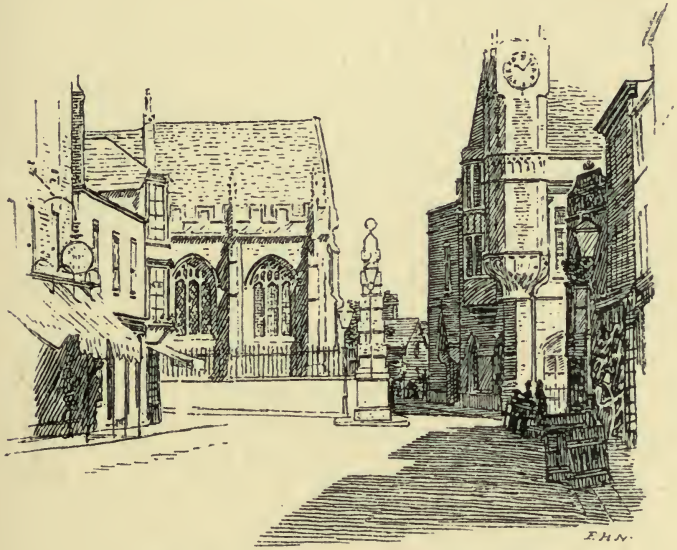
formed waves under the brush of the wind, returning to the attentive ear Æolian modulations, and detaining for moments the flying globes of thistledown."

Much of the more recent history of Maumbury is summed up in the above description, to which the following notes may serve as commentary. The first person in modern times who appears to have been struck by the amphitheatre, and to have made public his admiration, was Sir Christopher Wren, who encountered it on his way to Portland, on no less an errand than to see whether the stone in the quarries of that island would be suitable for the rebuilding of St. Paul's Cathedral. Whether Maumbury was at that time used as the place of execution I do not know, but for some time during the eighteenth century, and perhaps earlier, such was the case; and there it was that, in 1705, as Mr. Hardy states, Mary Channing met her fearful fate. Savage, in his "History of Dorchester," relates that Mary Brookes of Dorchester was forced by her parents to marry one Richard Channing, a grocer of the same place, and, by the way, a member of the same family as that from which Channing, the celebrated American preacher, sprang; "but, keeping company with some former gallants, she, by her extravagance, almost ruined her husband, and then poisoned him, by giving him white mercury, first in rice-milk, and twice afterwards in a glass of wine. At the Summer Assizes, 1704, she was tried before

Judge Price, made a notable defence, was found guilty and condemned, but pleaded pregnancy. She was removed and delivered of a child eighteen weeks before her death. At the Lent Assizes following she was recalled to her former sentence, and was strangled, then burned, in the middle of the area of the amphitheatre, March 21, 1705, aged 19; but persisted in her innocence to the last." It was on this occasion that ten thousand persons are said to have been present to gaze upon these horrible performances. Whether true or false, there is an old tradition that one hundred years previously another woman had suffered the same penalty in the same place for the same crime. Savage also notes that the edge of the circle is somewhat injured in one place where the gallows formerly stood, by the tramping of men and horses at executions. In 1767 the gibbet was removed to Bradford Down, one and a half miles from Dorchester on the Bridport Road, and there executions took place, as far as I know, until the prison was utilized for that purpose, as will later be mentioned.

In accordance with his views as to the kind of meetings to which Maumbury is most accustomed, Mr. Hardy makes it the place where Henchard met his wife after their long separation; and also the spot where the husband and the former lover had their interview in "Her Death and After," the cemetery in which the body of the wife lay being close at hand.

Turning from this and making for the town, South Street is reached, piercing the avenues extending on either hand, which mark the position of the ancient walls at this spot. A short distance up the street, on the right-hand side, is the Grammar School founded by Thomas Hardy, the ancestor of



CASTERBRIDGE—MARKET-PLACE AND PUMP.

all the Dorset Hardys, our author amongst the rest, at which school was educated the brilliant but unscrupulous Francis Troy, the husband of Bathsheba of "Far from the Madding Crowd." Still further up on the same side, and at the far corner of Durngate Street, is all that remains of Lucetta's

house, "High Place Hall." One wall of it remains, that in Durngate Street, but the "grey façade and parapet" have given way to a modern shop front. As to the face of stone over the back door, that item was taken from another building which has yet to be encountered. At the top of the street is the old pump, no longer a pump, but still a centre of town life as it was when Lucetta looked out upon it from her windows. Beyond, High West Street extends on the left and High East Street on the other hand. Taking the former and passing by the house in which Judge Jeffreys lodged—one of the few old houses still left—those familiar with the Poems will recognize the view which illustrates "The Burghers." At the top of the street are the Barracks, where Troy was stationed, and on either hand are two more of the avenues. That on the left, just beyond a fragment of the old Roman wall, is called the West Walks, and is perhaps the most beautiful of all the boulevards surrounding the town. Here it was that Farfrae, with the aid of Henchard's tarpaulins, constructed that out-of-doors ball-room, which proved so successful a rival to his master's feast in Poundbury. In one of the houses here also Mrs. Newson lived prior to her second marriage with the mayor. The avenue on the left of High West Street is rapidly deserted by the road, which slopes steeply down on its way to Bristol, until the wayfarer, who has followed the path between the trees, finds himself at the angle of the walls, standing

at some height above the highway itself. It was at this point that Henchard, in an evil hour for himself, finally overcame Farfrae's scruples, and induced the Scotchman to return to Casterbridge as manager of his business.

Returning to the main street and walking down

CASTERBRIDGE—THE WEST AVENUE.

the left side, a narrow passage, Glydepath Street, should next be followed. Before many yards have been traversed, an archway, now bricked up, whose keystone is a quaint stone mask much worn by time and the assaults of boys, will be seen on the left. It belongs to a building, known as Colyton House,

and it was from it that the idea of Lucetta's back door was taken. Those who see it will at once recognize the accuracy of the description in the novel: "The keystone of the arch was a mask. Originally the mask had exhibited a comic leer, as could still be discerned; but generations of Casterbridge boys had thrown stones at the mask, aiming at its open mouth; and the blows thereat had chipped off the lips and jaws as if they had been eaten away by disease." The house to which this adornment belongs was originally the town dwelling of a family of Churchills, believed to be connected with that from which the Marlborough family originated. Beyond this house the road slopes gradually down until a sharp little hill brings one to the level of the Frome, which here winds round between the town and the meadows which so closely approach it. By the river is a small grey cottage with a thatched roof, which was the official residence of the hangman of Dorchester, whilst such a functionary still existed. For, in the days when hanging was a much more frequent penalty than it now is, many, perhaps all, of the counties maintained their own hangmen, who, in the intervals of leisure from their professional engagements, earned their bread by some other and less noticeable avocation. Monsieur de Dorchester was triply a functionary; for, besides being hangman, he was also public whipper—a germane occupation—and such time as he could spare from these ministrations of the law

was devoted to the duties of his third office, that of scavenger to the town. In the wall of the cottage, on the left-hand side of the doorway, are still to be seen the holes in which were fixed the stanchions which supported the outside staircase by which the hangman reached his upper room, and on which he paused to reply to the questions of Gertrude Lodge, seeking for a cure for her withered arm. The river flows onwards past the meadows in which hundreds of persons used formerly to congregate to watch the hangings, and under the high ground on which this portion of Dorchester rests, a part of which is occupied now, as then, by the prison. This is by no means so prominent an object as it was when Gertrude passed under it in the dusk and "discerned on the level roof over the gateway three rectangular lines against the sky"—the beams of the gallows for the next morning's execution. For it was on the top of the lodge, where, as Savage tells us, there was a flat roof covered with copper, that the executions took place in view of all the criminal prisoners. "What time is the execution?" asked Gertrude. "The same as usual—twelve o'clock, or as soon after as the London mail-coach gets in. We always wait for that, in case of a reprieve." This is an exact statement of the system by which executions at the time were regulated. The hangman, it will be remembered, supposed that his visitor had come to him for the purpose of inducing him to be so merciful to his victim as to mitigate his sufferings by giving him a

speedy passage from this to another world, for in those days the sentence, "to be hung by the neck until you are dead," bore a very different significance from that which it possesses in these times of the

THE HANGMAN'S COTTAGE—CASTERBRIDGE.

"long-drop." So that friends and relatives, who had been unable to secure the acquittal of a prisoner, used to make interest with his executioner to lessen his sufferings as much as possible. In the Museum,

which is shortly to be visited, there will be seen a singular example of the methods which were adopted with this end in view—a sort of dawning of mercy towards the end of the night of judicial cruelty which so long brooded over the criminal code of this land. There are two lumps of lead in the collection just mentioned, about the size of a clock-weight, but quadrilateral and not round, each of which is inscribed in large letters, "MERCY." These weights were provided by a kind-hearted governor of the gaol, to be attached to the legs of a prisoner condemned to death for arson, who, being of very slight build, was, he feared, likely to linger a long time in agony before the purpose of the law was achieved. The gaol has been much altered since the date of the story of "The Withered Arm," and the little side door through which Gertrude entered it has disappeared, together with "the classic archway of ashlar, bearing the inscription, 'COVNTY JAIL: 1793.'" The prison, however, or its predecessor, is full of memories of the Wessex Tales, for besides the incidents connected with the tale of "The Withered Arm," it was the place of imprisonment of Boldwood and of Æneas Marston; and it was from here that the courageous watch-maker of Shottsford escaped to meet his natural foe, the hangman, in the cottage of Higher Crow-stairs.

Returning to High West Street and keeping down the left-hand side, a small inn called the

Old Ship will be seen on the opposite side, and recognized from the drawing in the Poems as the place where the story of Leipzig was told by

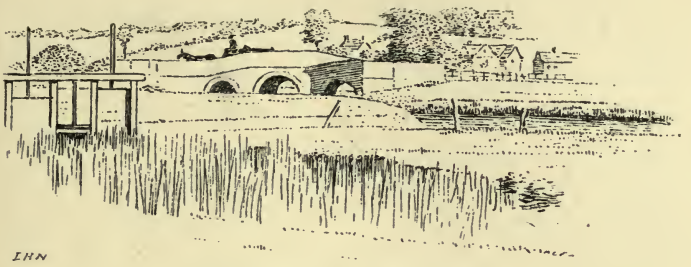
> "Old Norbert with the flat blue cap—
> A German said to be."

The next place of interest to be reached is the Dorset County Museum : not that which Lucetta recommended Elizabeth Jane to visit, declaring that it contained "crowds of interesting things—skeletons, teeth, old pots and pans, ancient boots and shoes, birds' eggs—all charmingly instructive ;" nor that in which the fire "threw a cheerful shine upon the varnished skulls, urns, penates, tessaræ, costumes, coats-of-mail, weapons, and missals, animated the fossilized ichthyosaurus and iguanodon ; while the dead eyes of the stuffed birds—those never absent familiars in such collections, though murdered to extinction out-of-doors—flashed as they had flashed to the rising sun above the neighbouring moors on the fatal morning when the trigger was pulled which ended their little flight." That building, in a back street, sacred to the memory of the tellers of the tales which make up the collection known as "A Group of Noble Dames," has been replaced by the present handsome and well-planned edifice, at the ashlaring of which Jude the Obscure assisted during his peregrinations through Wessex, and which contains a most interesting collection of objects of local interest,

presided over by a gentleman who might himself unfold the tales of many Noble Dames and Crusted Characters, if he chose to put pen to paper for that purpose. It is no part of the object of these pages to draw attention to things unconnected with the Wessex novels, so that the visitor must be left to himself to discover, as he will have no difficulty in doing, the other treasures in the Museum. But beyond the weights alluded to above, he should not miss seeing the man-traps, which will remind him of the episode at the end of the "Woodlanders," where Grace was caught in one of these engines, set for the purpose of injuring her husband, and which he can study in the light of Mr. Hardy's description of the various breeds of these bygone implements of destruction. "The toothless variety used by the softer-hearted landlords—quite contemptible in their clemency. The jaws of these resembled the jaws of an old woman to whom time has left nothing but gums. There were also the intermediate or half-toothed sorts, probably devised by the middle-natured squires, or those under the influence of their wives: two inches of mercy, two inches of cruelty, two inches of mere nip, two inches of probe, and so on, through the whole extent of the jaws. There were also, as a class apart, the bruisers, which did not lacerate the flesh, but only crushed the bone. The sight of one of these gins, when set, produced a vivid impression that it was endowed with life. It exhibited the combined aspects of a

shark, a crocodile, and a scorpion. Each tooth was in the form of a tapering spine, two and a quarter inches long, which, when the jaws were closed, stood in alternation from this side and from that. When they were open, the two halves formed a complete circle between two and three feet in diameter, the plate or treading place in the midst being about a foot square, while from beneath extended in opposite directions the soul of the apparatus, the pair of springs, each one being of a stiffness to render necessary a lever or the whole weight of the body when forcing it down."

Before leaving the Museum, the visitor must not fail to see the unsurpassed collection of glass beads, pins, and ornaments which formerly decked the head of some Roman lady, and were laid with her to rest in the great cemetery at Fordington, to be discovered under circumstances to be described when we reach that spot in the course of our perambulation.



DURNOVER—THE TEN HATCHES.

CHAPTER IV

CASTERBRIDGE—*concluded*

EMERGING from the Museum, the visitor finds himself in the centre of Dorchester, and, on the proper days, will see the rows of carriers' vans, hailing "from Mellstock, Weatherbury, The Hintocks, Sherton-Abbas, Kingsbere, Overcombe, and many other towns and villages around," whose "owners were numerous enough to be regarded as a tribe, and had almost distinctiveness enough to be regarded as a race." Here he may picture to himself the busy scene of the hiring-fair, and Gabriel Oak, in the days of this distress, earning a pocketful of coppers by playing "Jockey at the Fair."

Just beyond the Museum is St. Peter's Church, one of the few pieces of antiquity spared to Dorchester by devastating conflagrations from which it has suffered. Outside it is the statue of the

Rev. William Barnes, whose memory must not be forgotten in any work dealing with the Wessex of Thomas Hardy. Both of them were of the county of Dorset, and their works are racy of its soil; they were friends, though their points of view were so different, and the survivor was the author of a tribute to the memory of his dead companion, which has been reprinted at the end of Mr. Lionel Johnson's "Art of Thomas Hardy." Here the poet is described, much as he appears now in bronze, as "an aged clergyman, quaintly attired in caped cloak, knee-breeches, and buckled shoes, with a leather satchel slung over his shoulders, and a stout staff in his hand." He sprang from the Vale of Blackmore, that exquisite spot which Mr. Hardy has immortalized in several of his novels, and which became "the abiding-place of the people whose daily doings, sayings, and emotions have been crystallized in the poet's verse." "Occasionally," Mr. Hardy proceeds, "it is true, we find among the men and women presented in Mr. Barnes's volumes some who are housed in hamlets lying nominally beyond the Vale, but to my mind these characters are in a great measure Blackmore people away from home, bearing with them still the well-marked traits which distinguish the Vale population from that of the neighbouring uplands. The same may be said of his backgrounds and scenery. Moreover, when, moved by the pervading instinct of the nineteenth century, he

CASTERBRIDGE—ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

gives us whole poems of still life, unaffected and realistic as a Dutch picture, the slow green river of the Stour of the same valley, with its deep pools, whence leaps the may-fly undisturbed by anglers, is found to be the stream dearest to his memory, and the inspirer of some of his happiest effusions." For a large part of his life Mr. Barnes was a schoolmaster, and, in spite of his erudition and the modernness of some of his methods, not pecuniarily a successful one. Indeed, it is recorded in the life which appeared from the pen of his daughter, who is best known under her pseudonym of Leader Scott, that on a day when some empty honour was paid to his learning, whilst he himself was in great pecuniary straits—not a solitary occurrence in the lives of literary men—he exclaimed, "What a mockery is life! They praise me and take away my bread! They might be putting up a statue to me some day when I am dead, while all I want now is leave to live. I asked for bread, and they gave me a stone!" Gazing upon the statue which we have now reached, he seems to have attained at that moment to a prophetic strain, though it is pleasant to remember that his latter days were passed in comfort in the little parish of Winterborne Came, which we have yet to visit.

Lovers of Dorsetshire will scarcely need to be advised to study Barnes's poems, though the casual reader may find himself at first, to some extent, deterred by the fact that they are written in

dialect, always a somewhat discouraging discovery to those who are not to the manner born. But the slight difficulties, if indeed that term can be applied to them, are soon to be surmounted, and the labour thus expended is not in vain. The wayfarer forgets the slight toil which it has cost him to reach the summit of High Stoy when he gazes upon the misty loveliness of the Vale of White Hart which lies at his feet, and the experience of the reader will be the same when he contemplates the lives of its inhabitants as revealed to him in the pages of its poet and its son. "Unlike Burns, Beranger, and other poets of the people," says Mr. Hardy, in the criticism from which I have already quoted, "Mr. Barnes never assumed the high conventional style; and he entirely leaves alone ambition, pride, despair, defiance, and other of the grander passions which move mankind, great and small. His rustics are, as a rule, happy people, and very seldom feel the sting of the rest of modern mankind—the disproportion between the desire for serenity and the power of obtaining it. One naturally thinks of Crabbe in this connection; but though they touch at points, Crabbe goes much further than Barnes in questioning the justice of circumstance. Their pathos, after all, is the attribute upon which the poems must depend for their endurance; and the incidents which embody it are those of everyday cottage life, tinged throughout with that 'light that never was,' which the

emotional art of the lyrist can project upon the commonest things. It is impossible to prophesy, but surely much English literature will be forgotten when 'Woak Hill' is still read for its intense pathos, 'Blackmore Maidens' for its blitheness, and 'In the Spring' for its Arcadian ecstasy."

The statue of Barnes stands within the railings of St. Peter's Church, which the visitor should enter if only for the purpose of reading the tablet to the memory of the ancestor of the Dorsetshire Hardys, which will be found on the wall to the left of the door as it is entered. The inscription runs: "To the memorye of Thomas Hardy, of Melcombe Regis, in the Covnty of Dorsett, esqvier whoe endowed this Burrovghe wth a yearely revenew of 50 L; & appoynted ovt of it, to be employed for y^{e} better mayntenance of a preacher 20 L; a schoolmaster twenty Powndes; an husher twenty nobles; the alms women five markes. The Baylives & Burgisses of Dorchester, in testimony of their gratitvde, & to commend to posterity an example soe worthy of imitation, have erected this monvment. He dyed the 15th. of October, Anno: Do: (1599). The jvst shall be had in everlasting remembrance." The monument also bears the Hardy arms—sable, on a chevron between three escallops or, as many dragons' heads erased of the first; a crescent for difference. This worthy appears to have been a scion of the ancient family of Le Hardie of Jersey, and from him have descended

two other Thomas Hardys whose names the world will not soon forget—Nelson's flag-captain, and the author of the Wessex Novels. St. Peter's is the edifice described in "The Mayor of Casterbridge" as "a grizzled church, whose massive square tower rose unbroken into the darkening sky, the lower parts being illuminated by the nearest lamps sufficiently to show how completely the mortar from the joints of the stonework had been nibbled out by time and weather, which had planted in the crevices thus made little tufts of stone-crop and grass almost as far up as the very battlements."

Beyond the church is the North Street, formerly the narrow alley in which Henchard's waggon was upset on the night before the secret of his life was revealed to the people of Casterbridge by the furmity-seller. This street widens into what was formerly known as the Bullstake, from which one would conclude that it was the spot where the bull-baiting took place, though tradition seems to assign the amphitheatre as the scene of that amusement. The stocks, at any rate, stood here until a comparatively recent period. Further on, the road slopes down to the Frome, passing close to the prison and to the mill, near which was the cottage, "built of old stones from the long dismantled Priory, scraps of tracery, moulded window-jambs, and arch-labels, being mixed in with the rubble of the walls," in which Henchard hid his head after

his bankruptcy. The Priory here mentioned, of which, as far as the visitor can see, every trace has disappeared, belonged to the Franciscan Order, and was founded in 1364, though it seems likely that another house of the same Order may have preceded it on the same spot. It was suppressed in 1536, but great portions of it must have remained long after that date, for in 1784 the prison was built from its remains.

On the other side of North Street from St. Peter's Church is the Corn Exchange, where, though this building is later than the date of the story, the visitor may be permitted to conjure up a vision of Bathsheba, moving about amongst the burly frames of the farmers "as a chaise between carts," and exhibiting her samples of corn, "holding up the grains in her narrow palm for inspection, in perfect Casterbridge manner." Below the Corn Exchange is High East Street, which contains four places of entertainment, if all must be brought into a common category, associated with the Wessex series. The first and most important stands on the right-hand side of the road, and is that fine and most comfortable of country hotels, the King's Arms, whose spacious bow window, projecting into the street over the main portico, gives light to the room in which the dinner was held at which we first make the acquaintance of the Mayor of Casterbridge. Here, too, it was that Boldwood carried the fainting Bathsheba, after she had received the false news of Troy's

death by drowning. On the same side, but lower down, a plain inn of a different stamp, still much frequented by the military, is the Phœnix, the scene of Jenny's last dance.

> "'Twas Christmas, and the Phœnix Inn
> Was lit by tapers tall,
> For thirty of the trooper men
> Had vowed to give a ball,
> As 'Theirs' had done (fame handed down)
> When lying in the selfsame town,
> Ere Buonaparte's fall."

On the other side of the street one would naturally look for the Three Mariners, dearer still to the early lovers of the novel under the title of the King of Prussia; but, alas! no "ancient house of accommodation for man and beast, built of mellow sandstone, with mullioned windows of the same material, markedly out of perpendicular from the settlement of foundations," is there to be seen. In the collected edition of his works, Mr. Hardy not only gives this inn its real name, but reveals the fact that it is no longer in existence, having most unfortunately been pulled down; but those who, like the present writer, made search for the inn before being thus enlightened, may have lost, as he has done, a good deal of valuable time in the chase. There is, it is true, an inn which stands upon its site, which bears its name, and which is said to have a portion of its fabric incorporated into it somewhere in the back premises; but the true Hardy pilgrim

will carefully avert his eyes as he passes that lurid edifice, and refuse to believe that it has anything to do with that well-beloved spot where Farfrae sang, where Elizabeth Jane waited on him, and where Henchard, at the end of his twenty years' vow of temperance, insisted upon the choir singing one of "servant David's" most militant psalms, applying the words to his rival in business and love. The last of all the inns, and in some ways the most picturesque, is the White Hart, which is situated at the far end of the street on the left-hand side, and close to the first bridge over the Frome. Here the carrier to Longpuddle set off with his cargo of Crusted Characters, and here also Gertrude Lodge stopped whilst waiting to make her fearful experiment within the walls of the prison. The bridge just mentioned, of which more will be said in another place, marks the end of Dorchester in this direction, and the close of our perambulation in the town proper; but there are still some objects to be seen in that suburb or purlieu known as Fordington, the Durnover of "The Mayor of Casterbridge."

At the bridge just mentioned we may commence its exploration, taking the road which Dick Dewey followed, when he left Mr. Maybold on that same bridge to watch, "without heeding, how the water came rapidly from beneath the arches, glided down a little steep, then spread itself over a pool in which dace, trout, and minnows sported at ease among the

long green locks of weed that lay heaving and sinking with their roots towards the current," and finally to tear up the letter which was to have arranged his future and that of Fancy Day on such very different lines from those which they ultimately followed. Turning up Fordington Hill on the opposite side of the road to the White Hart, we pass through the street in which Farfrae set up his business after he had parted from Henchard, and keeping as straight on as we can we reach Mill Lane, the original of Mixen Lane in the story, "the Adullam of all the surrounding villages, the hiding-place of those who were in distress, and in debt, and trouble of every kind. Farm-labourers and other peasants, who combined a little poaching with their farming, and a little brawling and bibbing with their poaching, found themselves sooner or later in Mixen Lane. Rural mechanics too idle to mechanize, rural servants too rebellious to serve, drifted or were forced into Mixen Lane." Much of "this mildewed leaf in the sturdy and flourishing Casterbridge plant" has now disappeared, but the place, perhaps only to the eye which sees it, as it were, through the stained-glass window of the novel, still seems to bear something of its ancient reputation. The present writer is firmly of opinion that he has seen Joe and Charl there discussing the prospects of the next night's expedition, and the extensive white apron over the dingy gown, which Mr. Hardy regards as a "suspicious vesture in situations where spotlessness is

difficult," is certainly to be seen there with considerable frequency.

Amongst other things which have disappeared is the Peter's Finger, the real name of which was the King's Head. Strangers may doubtless suppose that the former extraordinary name is a pure invention, and may wonder how it arose even in the fecund brain of its author. But it is the genuine name of an inn at Lytchett Minster, on the signboard of which, now half obliterated, is a figure of the Prince of the Apostles holding up his hand, from which blood is dripping. Conjecture at one time had it that the name was a corruption of St. Peter's figure or picture, but its real explanation is curious, and, in a sense, a vestige of the feudal system of holding land.

August the 1st, Lammas-day, known in the calendar of the Catholic Church as St. Peter ad Vincula, was one of the days on which prædial service had to be done for the lord of certain manors, as a condition of tenure by the occupants. Such lands were called St. Peter-ad-Vincula lands, a term which easily got corrupted into St. Peter's Finger, a name which a small tract between Salisbury and Alderbury rejoices in to this day. From this follows the sign of the inn.

As the inn of this name in Mixen Lane was the place where the Skimmington ride was arranged, it may perhaps be permissible here to say a word in respect to that form of popular protest. In a

note in "The Fortunes of Nigel," Scott says that "the Skimmington, which in some degree resembled the proceedings of Mumbo Jumbo in an African village, has long been discontinued in England, apparently because female rule has become either milder or less frequent than among our ancestors." Scott derived his information on the subject largely from Mr. Roberts, of Lyme Regis, who gives a long account of the custom and its significance in his "Social History of the Southern Counties," where he states that the principal causes for riding the Skimmington are, "when a man and his wife quarrel, and he gives up to her; when a woman is unfaithful to her husband, and he patiently submits without resenting her conduct; or on account of any grossly licentious conduct on the part of married persons."

But Scott was wrong in supposing that the custom had long been discontinued in his day, for within the last twenty years a case was reported in the columns of the *Dorset County Chronicle* as having occurred at Whitchurch Canonicorum, a large but isolated parish between Bridport and Lyme. The centre of the procession consisted of a male and two female effigies carried on donkeys' backs. "One of the females was represented as having an extraordinary long tongue, which was tied back to the neck, whilst in one hand she held some notepaper, and in the other pen and holder." The procession was escorted by a number of persons dressed in various queer and

eccentric costumes, and the proceedings terminated by the hanging of the effigies on an extemporized gallows, the whole being finally burnt.

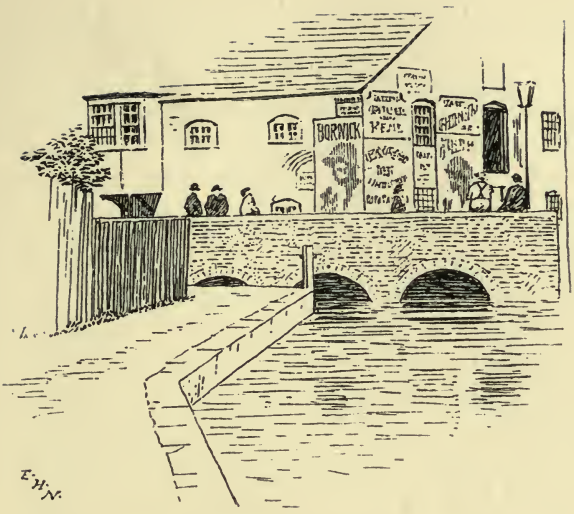
The last thing to see in Fordington is the fine old church of St. George, with the very remarkable Norman tympanum over its south doorway. This church was placed right in the centre of an immense

DURNOVER—THE CHURCH.

Roman burying-ground, and the glass ornaments, to which attention has been already called in the Museum, were found here a number of years ago, when the road was being lowered in order to provide work for labourers during an unusually hard winter. On the breast of another of the many bodies which have been found here, was discovered a coin of Hadrian, struck in brass, which appeared to have

been enclosed in linen, or some other perishable material, which turned to powder when touched. The sternum on which the much-worn coin lay was tinged green by the corrosion of the metal. It was in the burial-ground of this church that "Mrs. Henchard's dust mingled with the dust of women who lay ornamented with glass hairpins and amber necklaces, and men who held in their mouths coins of Hadrian, Posthumus, and the Constantines." Here, too, it was that Elizabeth Jane, whilst visiting her mother's grave, first made the acquaintance of Lucetta.

The indications which have been given in this and the preceding chapters will show how closely Dorchester is connected with the incidents of many of the Wessex novels, and particularly, of course, with the story of the Man of Character, who was its mayor. But there are one or two other connections, not specially associated with particular places in the town, which may here be grouped together. At Casterbridge it was that Stephen Smith's grandfather lived, and here he commenced those architectural studies which eventually brought him into contact with the changeful Elfrida, the possessor of the pair of blue eyes. Here also Bob Loveday, brother to the Trumpet-Major, came to meet his Matilda; and here Raye sat in the court and thought upon the Anna whom he had left behind him in Melchester as he went the Western Circuit.



CASTERBRIDGE—BRIDGE OVER THE FROME.

CHAPTER V

CASTERBRIDGE TO KINGSBERE

HAVING concluded our survey of Dorchester, we may now proceed to explore the adjacent country, nor does it greatly matter which of the four main roads leading forth from it we choose, for in all directions there are plenty of places beautiful and interesting in themselves, and endowed with the additional charm of having been selected by Mr. Hardy as the haunts of the characters of his novels. But as one must make a beginning somewhere, perhaps the London Road will serve as

well as another, so we may descend the slope of High East Street and make for the bridge just beyond the White Hart. Standing on this and looking down the road, there can be seen a second bridge, but of stone, a few hundred yards further down. This more distant viaduct, known as Grey's Bridge, was that towards which Bob Loveday's eyes were directed in search of the London coach which was to bring the fair Matilda to his arms. Mr. Hardy compares these bridges with one another in "The Mayor of Casterbridge," contrasting the different classes of persons that congregate upon them and lean or sit upon their parapets.

"Two bridges," he writes, "stood near the lower part of Casterbridge town. The first, of weather-stained brick, was immediately at the end of High Street, where a diverging branch from that thoroughfare ran round to the low-lying Durnover lanes; so that the precincts of the bridge formed the merging point of respectability and indigence. The second bridge, of stone, was further out on the highway—in fact, fairly in the meadows, though still within the town boundary. These bridges had speaking countenances. Every projection in each was worn down to obtuseness, partly by weather, more by friction from generations of loungers, whose toes and heels had from year to year made restless movements against these parapets, as they had stood there meditating on the aspect of affairs. In the case of the more friable bricks and stones, even the flat faces were worn

WEATHERBURY CHURCH.

into hollows by the same mixed mechanism. The masonry of the top was clamped with iron at each joint; since it had been no uncommon thing for desperate men to wrench the coping off and throw it into the river, in reckless defiance of the magistrates. For to this pair of bridges gravitated all the failures of the town; those who had failed in business, in love, in sobriety, in crime. Why the unhappy hereabout usually chose the bridges for their meditations in preference to a railing, a gate, or a stile, was not so clear.

"There was a marked difference of quality between the personages who haunted the near bridge of brick, and the personages who haunted the far one of stone. Those of lowest character preferred the former, adjoining the town; they did not mind the glare of the public eye. They had been of comparatively no account during their successes; and, though they might feel dispirited, they had no particular sense of shame in their ruin. Their hands were mostly kept in their pockets; they wore a leather strap round their waists, and boots that required a great deal of lacing, but seemed never to get any. Instead of sighing at their adversities, they spat; and instead of saying the iron had entered into their souls, they said they were down on their luck. Jopp in his times of distress had often stood here; so had Mother Cuxsom, Christopher Coney, and poor Abel Whittle. The *misérables* who would pause on the remoter bridge were of a politer stamp.

They included bankrupts, hypochondriacs, persons who were what is called 'out of a situation' from fault or lucklessness, the inefficient of the professional class—shabby-genteel men, who did not know how to get rid of the weary time between breakfast and dinner, and the yet more weary time between dinner and dark. The eyes of this species were mostly directed over the parapet upon the running water below. A man seen there looking thus fixedly into the river was pretty sure to be one whom the world did not treat kindly for some reason or other. While one in straits on the townward bridge did not mind who saw him so, and kept his back to the parapet to survey the passers-by, one in straits on this never faced the road, never turned his head at coming footsteps, but, sensitive to his own condition, watched the current whenever a stranger approached, as if some strange fish interested him, though every finned thing had been poached out of the river years before. There and thus they would muse. If their grief were the grief of oppression, they would wish themselves kings; if their grief were poverty, wish themselves millionaires; if sin, they would wish they were saints or angels; if despised love, that they were some much-courted Adonis of county fame. Some had been known to stand and think so long with this fixed gaze downwards, that eventually they had allowed their poor carcases to follow that gaze; and they were discovered the next morning in the pool beneath out of reach of their troubles."

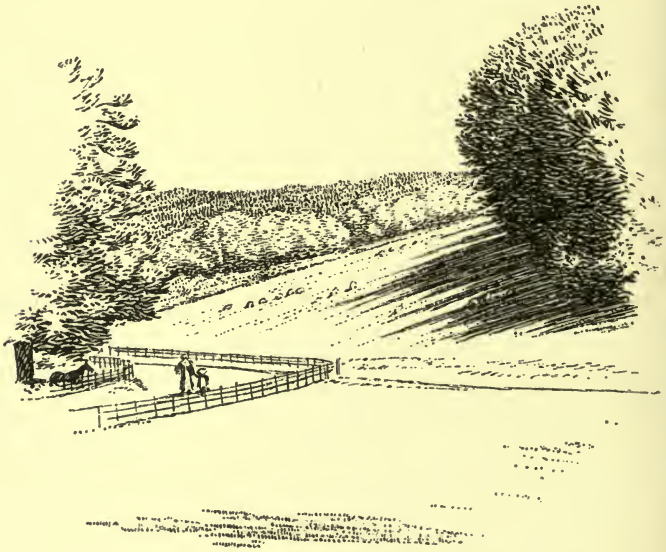
As to the character of the brick bridge at the present day, there can be no manner of doubt. Go there at any time on any fine day, and the loafers are to be seen just as the novelist pictures them, quite happy, quite careless, and quite idle.

The stone bridge is not without its inhabitants, unfortunately, though they are naturally a much smaller band. It was on this bridge that Henchard took up his station, and there he met Farfrae, when the latter offered to give him house-room in the abode which the mayor had himself owned in happier days. Looking over the northern parapet of this bridge and following the course of the stream with the eye, the cogs and winches of the Ten Hatches come into view, approached by a foot-path on the east of the stream. This was the path followed by Henchard on the night when he intended to find an end for his troubles in the swift-running stream, and was led to abandon his intention by the sight of the Skimmington figure, which he supposed to be a ghostly presentation of his own body, swirling round in the deep waters of the pool.

A little further on, the road forks, the left branch passing over a number of small hills and valleys to Longpuddle, which we shall reach by a different route. This, however, was the road along which the carrier Burthen conveyed the tellers of the tales known as "The Crusted Characters" from the White Hart at which he put up. It was also

the road traversed by Tony Keyte, the arch-deceiver, on the day when his dalliances with the fair sex were exposed to his shame and confusion.

The road which we shall follow is that on the right, and here it may be noted that we are now traversing the Via Dolorosa of poor Fanny Robin's



YALBURY GREAT WOOD AND THE WEATHERBURY ROAD.

last day on earth; for it was along this highway that she dragged her weary limbs to lay them in Casterbridge Poorhouse.

A mile or two further on and we come in sight of Yellowham Wood, the Yalbury Great Wood of "Under the Greenwood Tree," over which Fancy

Day's father was keeper, and in the nut-groves of which she and Dick Dewey made up their lovers' quarrel. The third ascent from Casterbridge, known as Yellowham Hill, is connected with two scenes in the Wessex novels, for at the top of this hill Henchard met Farfrae, and vainly attempted to induce him to return to the bedside of the dying Lucetta ; and here also Troy, whilst driving Bathsheba home from Casterbridge, met Fanny Robin making her way to the poorhouse. Looking into the recesses of the wood as we mount the hill, we may recall the adventure of Joseph Poorgrass with the owl, on the night when the possessor of "the multiplying eye," possibly on account of that inconvenient possession, had lost his way amongst its trees.

"'Once he had been working late at Yalbury Bottom, and had had a drap of drink, and lost his way as he was coming home—along through Yalbury Wood, didn't ye, Master Poorgrass ?'

"'No, no, no ; not that story !' expostulated the modest man, forcing a laugh to bury his concern.

"'And so 'a lost himself quite,' continued Mr. Coggan, with an impassive face, implying that a true narrative, like time and tide, must run its course and would respect no man. 'And as he was coming along in the middle of the night, much afeared, and not able to find his way out of the trees nohow, 'a cried out, "Man-a-lost ! Man-a-lost !" A owl in a tree happened to be crying "Whoo-whoo-whoo !"

as owls do, you know, shepherd' (Gabriel nodded), 'and Joseph, all in a tremble, said, "Joseph Poorgrass, of Weatherbury, sir!"'

"'No, no, now—that's too much!' said the timid man, becoming a man of brazen courage all of a sudden. 'I didn't say *sir*. I'll take my oath I didn't say, "Joseph Poorgrass, of Weatherbury, sir." No, no; what's right is right, and I never said sir to the bird, knowing very well that no man of a gentleman's rank would be hollering there at that time o' night. "Joseph Poorgrass, of Weatherbury," that's every word I said, and I shouldn't ha' said that if 't hadn't been for Keeper Day's metheglin. . . . There, 'twas a merciful thing it ended where it did.'"

I do not know whether in this tale Mr. Hardy made use of a piece of local folk-lore, but it is quite probable that he did so, for there are at least two closely similar variants which are current in the Midland Counties.

Descending the hill on the other side, the road passes through a small group of houses, Troy-town, the Roy-town of "Far from the Madding Crowd." The visitor will look in vain for the Buck's Head, outside which the bodies of Fanny Robin and her baby lay in the drip of the trees, whilst Poorgrass steadily soaked his clay with ale in the company of Coggan and Mark Clark, for this famous inn of coaching times has disappeared. But at the date of the story, here it stood in a clearing of the wood,

its stables filled with relays of horses for the London coaches.

A little further on again, and we enter Puddle-

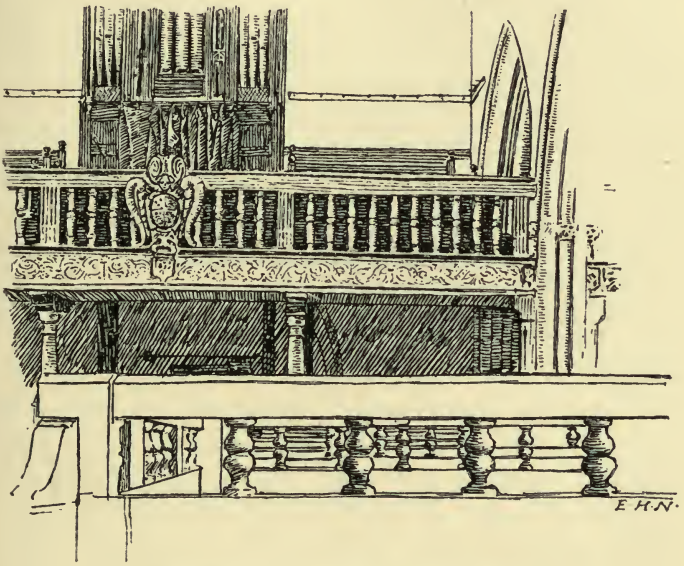
WEATHERBURY—THE CHURCH.

town, the Weatherbury of "Far from the Madding Crowd," and as we enter the village, we shall see, opposite to the principal inn, a grey house behind

a high wall, which occupies the position of the farm over which Bathsheba Everdene presided. It corresponds to it, however, in position only, for the building from which its structural characteristics were drawn is at some little distance off, and has yet to be seen. The church is the first object of interest, and is well worthy of careful study for its own intrinsic merits, apart altogether from its connection with the story, since it is about the only edifice of its kind in Dorsetshire which has been so fortunate as to escape the hands of the "restorer." It contains a fine Jacobean gallery, in which the voice of Gabriel Oak used to be heard as he sang bass in the choir, a very beautiful and almost unique Norman font, and some fine tombs, amongst them many belonging to the family of Martin, which formerly occupied the stately house of Athelhampton not far from the village. The porch, in which Troy slept on the night after Fanny Robin's funeral, is that on the north side, and cannot be said to have been improved by the dado of encaustic tiles with which it has been bedecked. The fine tower is battlemented, as Mr. Hardy describes, but the gurgoyles are not specially remarkable. Perhaps he added to it some of those at Sydling St. Nicholas, no very great distance off, which are as grotesque as the mediæval mind could desire.

If, returning from the church by the same road by which we approached it, we turn to the right, instead of seeking the main road, and then take the

first turn to the left, we shall find ourselves in a lane which follows the course of the Puddle up its valley. This stream, which is also known as the Piddle or the Trent, gives name not only to Puddletown, the largest place by which it passes, but also to a number



WEATHERBURY CHURCH—THE GALLERY.

of other villages, most of which we shall eventually visit.

The lane becomes narrower and narrower, and less and less to be desired by the cyclist, until suddenly it reaches a spot where there is an open field on the left, whilst on the other side is as

charming a Jacobean house as the eye need wish to gaze upon. This is Lower Waterston, formerly the seat of the Martins, before that family removed to the larger and finer house of Athelhampton. We are now face to face with the original of Bathsheba's farmhouse in "Far from the Madding Crowd." Though considerably renovated and somewhat altered, it may still be recognized as the prototype from which that homestead was described.

"By daylight, the bower of Oak's new-found mistress, Bathsheba Everdene, presented itself as a hoary building, of the Jacobean stage of Classic Renaissance as regards its architecture, and of a proportion which told at a glance that, as is so frequently the case, it had once been the manorial hall upon a small estate around it, now altogether effaced as a distinct property, and merged in the vast tract of a non-resident landlord which comprised several such modest demesnes. Fluted pilasters, worked from the solid stone, decorated its front, and above the roof pairs of chimneys were here and there linked by an arch, some gables and other unmanageable features still retaining traces of their Gothic extraction. Soft brown mosses, like faded velveteen, formed cushions upon the stone tiling, and tufts of the house-leek or sengreen sprouted from the eaves of the low surrounding buildings. A gravel walk leading from the door to the road in front was incrusted at the sides with more moss —here it was a silver-green variety, the nut-brown

of the gravel being visible to the width of only a foot or two in the centre. This circumstance, and the generally sleepy air of the whole prospect here, together with the animated and contrasting state of the reverse façade, suggested to the imagination that on the adaptation of the building for farming purposes the vital principle of the house had turned round inside its body to face the other way."

In the history of this house we have an example of another of the changes which has come over the life of the country-side during the last century and a half. Not merely have the country gentry ceased for the most part to take that active personal interest in the affairs of their county town which they formerly exhibited, but a great number of what may be called the smaller gentry of the last century have disappeared altogether from among the land-holding classes. Places such as this former seat of the Martins, and Poxwell, which belonged to the Hennings, to take only two examples, were formerly the homes of families who owned the freehold of the property around, lived upon it, cultivated friendly relationships with one another and with the working men around them, and altogether constituted a class, now unfortunately almost extinct, which undoubtedly gave to the country districts a variety, a solidarity, and a tone which is not now to be found.

Almost without exception these small manors in Dorset, and the same is true of other parts of

England, have fallen into the hands of the large landlords, who have converted them into farmhouses, or let them to persons who perhaps occupy them for the shooting season, but who take no real vital interest in their districts, such as was taken by the former small squirearchy, and can scarcely be expected to do so. The fact is inevitable, deplorable, and unalterable ; so, after making our lament over it, we may leave Waterston, and follow the road which eventually joins the direct route from Dorchester, of which mention has been already made.

And thus we reach Puddlehinton, the first part of a long winding street of dwellings pushing its way up the valley by the side of the Puddle, the last portion of which has its own church, its own separate existence, and is known as Puddletrenthide. To the ordinary observer it is not obvious where Puddlehinton ends and Puddletrenthide begins, and Mr. Hardy has brought them together under a common and highly appropriate name when he speaks of them as Longpuddle. Near the upper end of this straggling line of houses—in fact, just before the church of Puddletrenthide with its stately tower is reached—a road climbs steeply up the down on the right to reach the farm of Dole's Ash, better known to fame as Flintcomb Ash, the farm on which Tess worked after she had been deserted by Angel Clare. This farm, so unlike those of the Frome valley, which are secluded, well watered, and gloriously verdurous, lies amongst the

bare chalk hills of the uplands at the lower end of a vast field through which the road winds as an unhedged track. Near to it is the swede-field in which Tess and her companions worked "a stretch of about one hundred acres, in one patch, on the highest ground of the farm, rising above stony lanchets or lynchets—the outcrop of siliceous veins in the chalk formation, composed of myriads of loose white flints in bulbous, cusped, and phallic shapes."

Turberville

THE D'URBERVILLE ARMS.

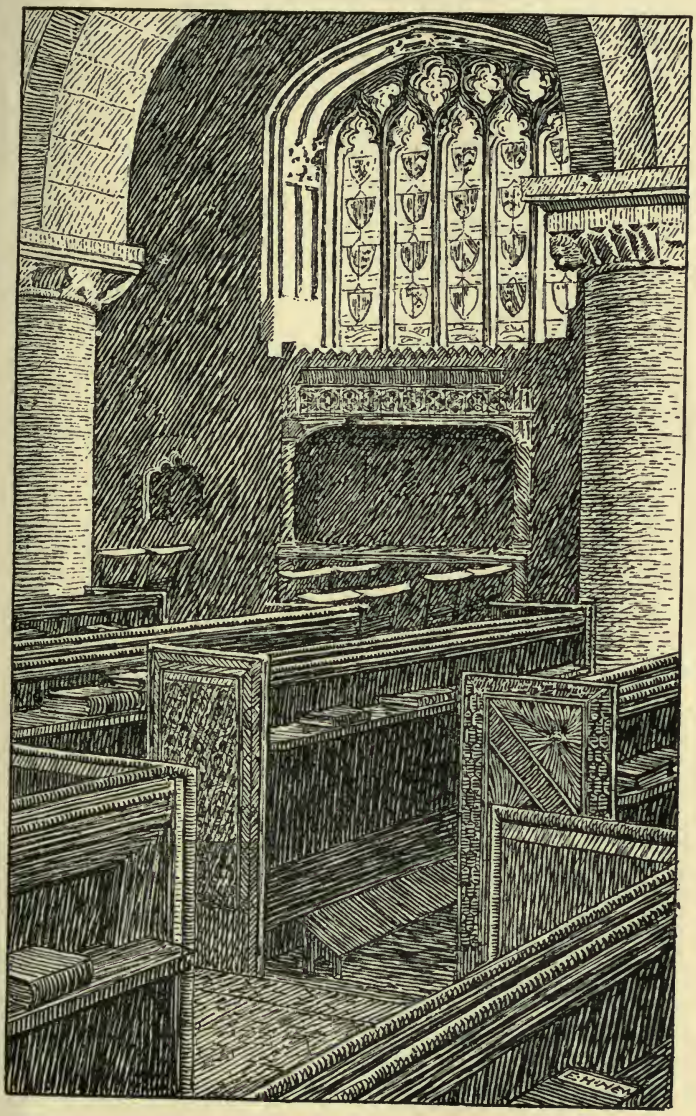
KINGSBERE.

CHAPTER VI

CASTERBRIDGE TO KINGSBERE—*continued*

IT is time for us to return from this divagation up the Puddle valley and follow the main road to Bere ; so, starting once more from Puddletown, we pass Athelhampton, the ancient seat of the Martins, one of the finest houses of its kind in Dorsetshire, and continue our highway until we reach Tolpuddle, the Tolchurch of "Desperate Remedies," where Owen Graye acted as clerk of the works during the restoration of the church, and where Marston stole the letter containing the damaging photograph of his dead wife. There is little to detain us here, for whoever may have been the real architect or clerk of the works, the entire church, with the exception of its tower, has been rebuilt.

Looking across the stream on the sky-line, we



KINGSBERE CHURCH.

can see the hill up which Owen walked, "a wild hill that had no name, beside a barren down where it never looked like summer," and thus obtain our first view of the "swarthy and abrupt slopes of Egdon," dear to Mr. Hardy even beyond the smiling valleys which skirt it, and dear through him to the many readers who count "The Return of the Native" as the chief amongst his masterpieces. Further on, and to the south of the main road, is another village, Affpuddle, the East Egdon of the last-mentioned novel, in whose church Clym Yeobright was married to Eustacia Vye. We may climb up from here on to the heath, and obtain a magnificent view of Egdon Heath, with the valley of the Frome separating it from the distant hills of the Isle of Purbeck, as fine a stretch of country being revealed from the top of the down as the lover of the picturesque can desire to see. Clym's cottage was not far from this point, and somewhere about here was the lawn-like oasis on which the rustic dance was held at which Eustacia vainly sought to find distraction from the dulness of her married life. If the pedestrian follows the road from Affpuddle to Moreton Station until he comes to a signpost on the top of the down, and then turns to the left, he will find on the left-hand side of the road, at a distance of somewhat less than a mile, a singular conical pit, something like the empty crater of a volcano, whose lava and cinders are represented by stout holly trees and waving bracken. This curious

pit, the largest of a number of similar cavities with which the heath is dotted in this district, is known as Culpepper's dish, and another near it is called Culpepper's spoon. There has been much discussion as to how these cavities may have originated, some having held that they were the work of men's hands, and intended for the protection of the Celtic tribes whose barrows rise on every side. There seems, however, little ground for this supposition, and the geological explanation that they are caused by subsidences of subjacent masses of sand seems a more reasonable solution of the difficulty. Be this as it may, it was in one of these hollows, though in a different part of the heath, that Tamsin and Mrs. Yeobright gathered the holly with which to deck the cottage at Bloom's End for the return of the native, for we are told that "the place where the hollies grew was in a conical pit, so that the tops of the trees were not much above the general level of the ground." In such a pit, too, it must have been that Troy exhibited his mastery over the art of swordsmanship to the bewitched and bewitching Bathsheba, the heroine of "Far from the Madding Crowd."

"The pit was a saucer-shaped concave, naturally formed, with a top diameter of about thirty feet, and shallow enough to allow the sunshine to reach their heads. Standing in the centre, the sky overhead was met by a circular horizon of fern: this grew nearly to the bottom of the slope and then abruptly ceased. The middle within the belt of

verdure was floored with a thick flossy carpet of moss and grass intermingled, so yielding that the foot was half buried within it."

But we must drag ourselves away from the fascinations of Egdon and return to the high-road, if we are ever to reach Kingsbere. A couple of miles from Tolpuddle will end our journey, and lead us to "the little blinking, one-eyed place," formerly the home of kings and princes, afterwards the chief seat of the Dorsetshire branch of the ancient Norman family of Turberville, associated in these latter days with one of the vicissitudes in the history of Joan Durbeyfield and her family, the degenerate descendants of that knightly race. Bere Regis owes its suffix to the fact that it was long a royal residence, and here it was that Ælfrith retired after her murder of Eadweard, king and martyr. The episode of the thrashing of Æthelstan with the large wax candle, which Bankes believes to have been the castle clock, of the pattern invented by King Alfred, is supposed to have occurred here—a thrashing so severe that, says the chronicler, Æthelstan hated wax candles ever after.

At a later date it seems to have been a somewhat favourite place of resort of King John, for there are records of at least six visits which he paid to it. There is also extant a letter from the king to the sheriff of Dorset, directing him "that he cause to be made a kitchen (*una coquina*) for our service at Bere." The king's house appears to have occupied

the site on which was afterwards erected the manor-house of the Turberville family. Before this family became lords of the manor, however, it belonged to the great Simon de Montfort, and later a moiety of it was the property of the Abbess of Tarent. On the dissolution of the abbeys it was granted by Henry VIII. to Robert Turberville, who was already the lord of the other half.

As this family plays so important a part in one of the Wessex novels, it may not be out of place to give here some account of its history. "The Turbervilles," says the county history, "or *de Turbida Villa*, derived their descent from Sir Pagan or Payne de Turberville, who came out of France with William the Conqueror, as appears by Battell Abbey Roll. He was one of the twelve knights who assisted Robert Fitz-Hamon, Lord of Estremavilla in Normandy, and after Earl of Gloucester, 4 Will. Rufi, 1091, in his conquest of Glamorganshire. He, dividing the fertile part of the county amongst his knights, gave the lordship and castle of Coity to Sir Pain, in which family it long remained."

In 1297 "Brianus de Thorberville" appears as Lord of Piddle Turberville, or Briant's Puddle, as it is now called, and later on the same family is found possessed of that moiety of the lordship of Bere which did not belong to the Abbess of Tarent, so that the property into possession of which Robert Turberville entered on the dissolution of the abbey

completed their ownership of the place in question. For centuries the Turberville family was one of the most important of this part of England, and its members are found holding positions of trust, such as governorships of castles, and occupying the post of "Parliament men" for their native county. The names of two of them still linger in history, a surgeon and a poet.

Of the first more will be said when we come to visit his grave in Salisbury Cathedral. The latter, who was born at Winterborne Whitchurch, became a Fellow of New College, Oxford, 1561, subsequently going to Russia as secretary to Thomas Randolph, ambassador at that court. He published a poetical account of the country which he thus visited, which appeared in Hackluit's "Voyages." Amongst a host of other works, the following may be selected for mention on account of the quaintness of their titles:—

"Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs, and Sonnets, with a discourse of the friendly affection of Tymetes to Pyndara, his ladie; newly corrected with additions, and set out by George Turberville, gentleman, London, by Henrie Denham, 1570." This work, which was dedicated to Anne, Countess of Warwick, was reprinted in Chalmers' Edition of the Poets. Another is "Tragical Tales, translated by Turberville, in Time of his Troubles, out of Sundrie Italians, with the Argument and L'Envoye to ech Tale."

Of this Dorsetshire branch of an ancient family

there now remain as chief, probably as sole representatives, a number of humble folk, who hide unwittingly their honourable surname under several corruptions. One of the most common of these is Tollafield, and another is Troublefield. On this last I have to remark that Troublefield occurs as early as 1587 in the list of persons buried at Sherborne, the uncorrupted name of Turberville also figuring in the same list and at no very distant date. It is also interesting to note that one Henry de Trublevil held the manor of Sherborne, 1 Henry III., but whether this knight's name was a corruption or a clerical error I do not know. Perhaps, though this is unlikely, this may have been a distinct family, and some of the existing Troublefields may be of its lineage. For the real old families of Dorset must be sought for mainly amongst the lowly, and are not to be found in the seats of the mighty. Mr. Hardy has alluded to the Priddles who represent the old family of Paridelle—no invention on his part, but sober fact—and no doubt many other instances might be found by the patient genealogist.

The manor-house of the Turbervilles, which has now completely disappeared, stood a little east of the church, on the bank of the stream, and its hall contained a series of escutcheons depicting the arms of the family impaled with those of families with which they had intermarried. Most of these armorial bearings have been reproduced in the window which now occupies the south side of the

Turberville chapel in the church. As we make our way to the church, we can recall the fact that, apart from the book in which it chiefly figures, Bere was the place where Owlett was hidden from justice after his last struggle with the excise officers. It also was selected as a place of hiding for the women-

EXTERIOR OF THE D'URBERVILLE AISLE.

kind of Miller Loveday, in case of an invasion by Bonaparte, and is mentioned in the same capacity in the poem of "The Alarm." And it was in the church here that Yeobright's father put such power into his playing of the bass viol as to cause the

windows to rattle, and "old Pa'son Gibbons to lift his hands in his great holy surplice as natural as if he'd been in common clothes, and seem to say to himself, 'Oh for such a man in our parish!'"

The church has several features of intrinsic interest, including a very fine transition Norman font and a really remarkable carved wood roof, decorated with large figures and fine bosses, which possession it owes to the generosity of Cardinal Morton, who was born at Milborne St. Andrews, not far off. But the object of most interest to us is the south aisle or Turberville chapel, beneath the floor of which lies old Durbeyfield's "gr't family vault," containing his "knighted forefathers in lead." In the centre of the floor is a great stone on which is inscribed—

"OSTIUM SEPULCHRI ANTIQUAE
FAMILIAE TURBERVILLE
24 JUNIJ 1710
THE DOOR OF THE SEPULCHRE
OF THE ANCIENT FAMILY
OF THE TURBERVILLES."

And around the walls are their memorials stripped of their brasses, "the tombs of the family covering in their dates several centuries. They were canopied, altar-shaped, and plain; their carvings being defaced and broken; their brasses torn from their matrices, the rivet-holes remaining like marten-holes in a sand-cliff." In the south wall is the window filled with

recent stained glass, from which the ramping lion of the Turbervilles, with his many alliances, flames down on the stones which hide the remains of the dead of that race. In this wall, too, there is the trace of an additional door, whose presence is accounted for by a tale which relates that it was made by some member of that family who had quarrelled with his vicar, and sworn that he would never again pass through his church door. The

GREENHILL.

quarrel was made up in time, as quarrels sometimes are, and the knight was willing to return to his parish church but for his vow. Eventually, on the suggestion of the cleric, this difficulty was overcome by the construction of a new door through which access could be had without using that from which he was debarred by his oath. Under the outer wall of this chapel it was that, strong in the opinion that your family vault is your own freehold, Mrs. Durbeyfield

made a place of shelter for the houseless members of her family out of the great four-post bed. Perhaps as a pendant to the description of the flitting of the Durbeyfield family, the reader may not regret to be reminded of the account which Mr. Hardy gives in his article on the "Dorsetshire Labourer," of the method of removal of the goods of a family from one village to another.

"The goods are built up on the waggon to a well-nigh unvarying pattern, which is probably as peculiar to the country labourer as the hexagon to the bee. The dresser, with its finger-marks and domestic evidences thick upon it, stands importantly in front, over the backs of the shaft-horses, in its erect and natural position, like some Ark of the Covenant, which must not be handled slightingly or overturned. The hive of bees is slung up to the axle of the waggon, and alongside of it the cooking-pot or crock, within which are stowed the roots of garden flowers. Barrels are largely used for crockery, and budding gooseberry bushes are suspended by the roots; while on the top of the furniture a circular nest is made of the bedding for the matron and children, who sit there through the journey. If there is no infant in arms, the woman holds the head of the clock, which at any exceptional lurch of the waggon strikes one, in thin tones. The other object of solicitude is the looking-glass, usually held in the lap of the eldest girl. It is emphatically spoken of as *the* looking-glass, there being but one

in the house, except possibly a small shaving-glass for the husband."

One must not leave Bere without taking a look, if only from below, at Woodbury Camp, the ramparts of which look down upon the village from the top of the hill. Here is annually held the autumn fair, now curtailed in length and shrunken in importance, at which Troy performed the part of Dick Turpin at the circus under the eyes of his wife and her hinds.

The visitor to this earthwork will be surprised to find its interior occupied by a number of dwelling-places and other houses, which look as if they might be dwelling-places, but are closely shut up. The latter are only occupied once a year at the time of the great fair, when they serve as drinking-booths for the gradually decreasing number of pilgrims who make their way to it. Mr. Hardy's account of Greenhill may fitly conclude this chapter.

"Greenhill was the Nijni Novgorod of South Wessex; and the busiest, merriest, noisiest day of the whole statute number was the day of the sheep-fair. This yearly gathering was upon the summit of a hill, which retained in good preservation the remains of an ancient earthwork, consisting of a huge rampart and entrenchment of an oval form encircling the top of the hill, though somewhat broken down here and there. To each of the two chief openings on opposite sides a winding road ascended, and the level green space of twenty or thirty acres enclosed by the

bank was the site of the fair. A few permanent erections dotted the spot, but the majority of the visitors patronized canvas alone for resting and feeding under during the time of their sojourn here."

NOTE.—Since these lines were in print, I find that Sanders, in his "De Visibili Monarchia Ecclesiæ," speaking of the eleven bishops who refused to conform to Protestantism under Queen Elizabeth, mentions, amongst the number, "Turberville (Troblefildus) of Exeter." It would thus appear that Troublefield is a corruption of an alternative or Latinized form of Turberville.

WELLBRIDGE.

CHAPTER VII

CASTERBRIDGE TO ANGLEBURY BY THE MAIN ROAD

THERE are two roads by which one may go from Dorchester to Wareham, and we shall traverse both of them in due course, but for this turn we will take the main turnpike road and leave that which crosses Egdon Heath for another occasion. The Wareham road leads through Fordington and past Max Gate, Mr. Hardy's house, which certainly ought not to pass unmentioned in any account of Wessex. A mile or two on the road we reach on the right-hand side the gates of Came Park, through which we can make our way to the church where the poet Barnes officiated during the latter part of his life. In the churchyard, under

the shadow of a tall white cross, his body now rests. Not far from here, in the middle of a field, is an object which in the distance one would take to be the gable-end of some old barn. A closer inspection, however, which reveals the remains of Gothic mouldings in the window, shows that it is a portion of a small church. As a matter of fact, it is all that is left of both church and houses which made up a small village, save the mounds and hillocks around it which mark where the dwellings stood. The Faringdon Ruin, for thus it is named, formed a part of Barnes's parish, and of it he wrote—

"As oft I see by sight, or oft
In mind, the ridges on the ground,
The mark of many a little croft
And house where now no wall is found,
I call the folk to life again
And build their houses up anew;
I ween I shape them wrong, but who
Can now outmark their shapes to men?"

Mr. Hardy makes Anne Garland take her way to Overcombe by this ruin, and here occurs the scene, where, after trying to make the Trumpet-Major repeat his proffers of love, she wrings from him the fact that Bob is once more standing between them.

"In the middle of the field rose a fragment of stone wall in the form of a gable, known as Faringdon Ruin; and when they had reached it, John paused and politely asked her if she were not

WELLBRIDGE AND THE D'URBERVILLE MANOR-HOUSE.

a little tired with walking so far. No particular reply was returned by the young lady, but they both stopped, and Anne seated herself on a stone, which had fallen from the ruin to the ground.

"'A church once stood here,' observed John, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"'Yes, I have often shaped it out in my mind,' she returned. 'Here where I sit must have been the altar.'

"'True; this standing bit of wall was the chancel end.' . . .

"'If the altar stood there, hundreds of people have been made man and wife just there, in times past,' she said, with calm deliberateness, throwing a little stone on a spot about a yard westward.

"John annihilated another tender burst and replied, 'Yes, this field used to be a village. My grandfather would call to mind when there were houses here. But the squire pulled 'em down, because poor folk were an eyesore to him.'"

Returning to the main road and pursuing our way, we come next to the little church of Whitcomb, which was the first living, if that which carries with it only fifteen pounds per annum can be called a living, held by the Dorsetshire poet whose tomb we have just left. Still further on and we are at cross-roads, that between Weymouth and Moreton Station intersecting our pathway. This point is called Warmwell Cross, and here it was that the

distracted preacher, Mr. Stockwell, found Will Latimer and his men tied to trees after the men of Nether Myntown had successfully recaptured their smuggled tubs of brandy. Nether Mynton itself is no further off than the next turn on the left hand, being known to the Ordnance surveyors and those who construct everyday maps of Dorset as Owermoigne. We may turn down into the village, which is a quiet little spot, with a church which, since Lizzie Newberry lived there, has been entirely rebuilt with the exception of its tower—the tower whose battlements concealed all the male population of the village on the day of the memorable search for the hidden tubs. Perhaps the reader may like to hunt for the hollow left by the cave under the apple tree in which so many of the tubs were ultimately found, and if so, I hope he may be more successful in his quest than the present writer was. The other places in the story, which centres round this village, lie between it and the sea, and are mostly alluded to by their own proper names—Ringsworth and Lulstead, by a slight transposition of terminals, standing for Ringstead and Lulworth bays. Now, a mile or two on our way, the road begins to skirt the lower slopes of Egdon Heath, which will be seen to the left. We pass a lonely inn by the roadside, and looking over the fence on the opposite side of the road, we see a small hill, known as Blacknoll, whereon are barrows, and at once begin to think of the Quiet Woman and

Rainbarrow in the distance. But the originals of these places are in another part of the heath.

The road next crosses the railway lines, and immediately afterwards brings us in sight of one of the most picturesque scenes in this part of Dorset, the river Frome running between tall waving rushes and flags, and making its way under an old grey stone bridge, whilst an ancient house, almost as old as the bridge, stands on the other side of the stream, surrounded by its farm buildings. This is Wool-bridge, or Well-bridge, as Mr. Hardy, reverting to the older name, calls it, and the house is the old manor of a branch of the Turbervilles, the place to which Tess and Angel Clare went to pass their honeymoon, and the scene of Tess's confession and Angel's apostasy.

The house itself, though much altered and renovated, dates back, according to the county history, in all probability to the time of Sir John Turberville, knight, sheriff of Dorset in 1652. It still contains two pictures of "women of middle age, of a date some two hundred years ago, whose lineaments once seen can never be forgotten. The long pointed features, narrow eye, and smirk of the one, so suggestive of merciless treachery; the bill-hook nose, large teeth, and bold eye of the other, suggesting arrogance to the point of ferocity, haunt the beholder afterwards in his dreams." A few more years and there will be nothing to behold, for the pictures, which are painted on the wall, are

rapidly fading, and can only with difficulty now be made out by the aid of a candle.

The branch of Turbervilles to whom this manor belonged were junior to those of Bere, and to them belongs the legend of the Turberville coach, alluded to in the novel. The story is that two members of the family, travelling together in the heavy coach of their day, fell into so bitter a quarrel that one only left it alive, the other having been murdered *en route*. This coach, it is said, can be seen, but only by those with Turberville blood in their veins, lumbering along the road between Wool and Bere, over which it was travelling when the tragedy was enacted. In connection with this legend there is a curious story of recent days, which the present writer has reason to know is absolutely true, and which he commends to the consideration of the Society for Psychical Research. A gentleman, who was unacquainted with the story, was walking along this road in order to reach a neighbouring house, where he was to dine, when he met an old-fashioned but handsome coach with outriders. After dinner he remarked to his friends that he had supposed that a certain lady, whom he named, had been dead until he saw her driving her coach along the Wool road. This lady, be it said, had been in the habit of using such a coach long after others had taken to more modern means of conveyance. His friends assured him that the lady in question had been dead, as he had supposed, for many years, and added that he must

ANGLEBURY.

have seen the Turberville coach. On telling him of the legend of the country-side, they added that it was curious that *he* should have seen it, since the sight was supposed to be exclusively reserved for those in some way connected with the family. Now the strangest part of this story is to come, for it

THE D'URBERVILLE MANOR-HOUSE.

turned out that the gentleman was on his mother's side directly descended from the old Dorsetshire Turbervilles.

Not far from the house, though further than Mr. Hardy makes it in the novel, is Bindon Abbey, to see which we must retrace our steps as far as the level crossing and turn to the left.

A short distance further and the lane divides into two branches, that on the right going to the village of Wool, where, in the churchyard, was the burial-place of this branch of the Turbervilles, whilst that on the left leads to Bindon Abbey and mill. The latter, at which Angel Clare purposed studying the art of milling, is a few yards along the road on the left at the next fork, the right-hand road leading past the gates of the abbey. This foundation belonged to the Cistercian Order, and was established by Roger or Robert de Newburgh, and Matilda his wife, in 1172. It was surrendered to the king in 1539, and it is said that after the dissolution its twelve bells were stolen and appropriated by the churches of Wool, Coombe, and Fordington ; a tale which is embodied in the local rhyme—

"Wool streams and Coombe wells,
Fordington cuckolds stole Bindon bells."

But little remains of the abbey, now the property of the Weld family, save the foundations and some of the tombs of the abbots. One of these still shows the matrix of a fine brass, which represented a full-length figure in the dress of an abbot, bearing a pastoral staff, with foliated head, in his left hand. The margin is surrounded with an inscription in Lombardic capitals (the matrices of the letters being quite perfect) which reads—

"ABBAS RICARDVS DE MANERS HIC TVMVLATUR
AD POENAS TARDUS DEVS HVNC SALVANS TVEATVR."

Another empty coffin, destitute of a lid, lies embedded in the soil—the coffin in which Mr. Hardy makes Angel Clare, whilst in a somnambulistic condition, deposit Tess.

Leaving the abbey and following the road for somewhat less than a mile, the first turn to the left

ANGLEBURY.

should be taken towards the village of East Stoke. A short distance down this road is another turn to the left, which leads to East Stoke Farm, the Holmstoke of "The Withered Arm," where Lodge and the ill-fated Gertrude lived. Keeping on across the railway we reach once more the main road, which,

after traversing another part of Egdon Heath, passes through the ancient earthen ramparts of the town of Wareham, and leads us to the Red Lion, at which Ethelberta and Lady Petherwin

BINDON—THE ABBOT'S COFFIN.

were stopping when the story of "The Hand of Ethelberta" opens. The town called Anglebury in the Wessex novels was, in the earlier editions of "The Return of the Native," spoken of as Southerton, and was the scene of the abortive marriage between Tamsin and Wildeve. Wareham reminds

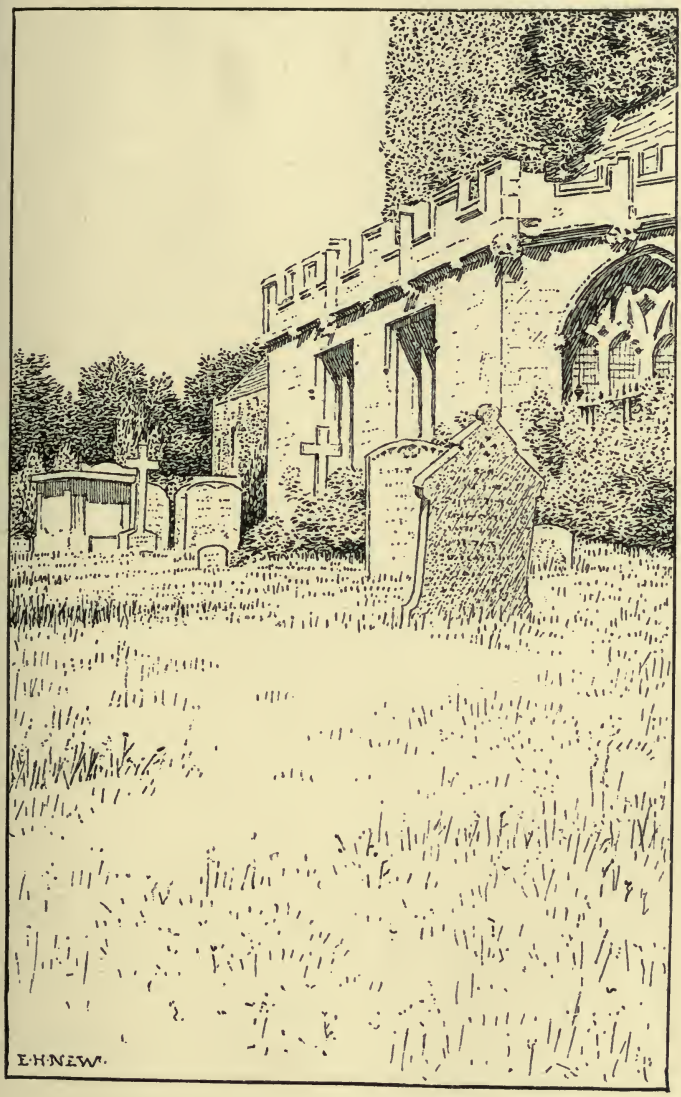
one to a certain extent of Dorchester, for it is square, provided with ramparts, and defended by a stream on one side ; but here the resemblance ceases, for no genius has arisen to decorate its earthen banks with avenues of trees, and the space within them is now too large for the shrunken town. It contains an over-restored church in which rest the remains of Hutchins, the Dorset historian. It should be visited for the sake of its fine leaden Norman font, its curious inscribed stones of an early period, and the two singular chapels of St. Eadweard, king and martyr, and St. Thomas of Canterbury ; the latter most singularly contrived in the interior of a large buttress on the south side of the sacrarium.

MELLSTOCK—THE VILLAGE SCHOOL.

CHAPTER VIII

CASTERBRIDGE TO ANGLEBURY BY WAY OF EGDON HEATH

THE road which we are to traverse in this chapter is, in large part, "the aged highway which traversed the lower levels of the heath (Egdon), and in many portions of its course overlaid an old vicinal way, which branched from the great western road of the Romans, the Via



MELLSTOCK CHURCH.

Iceniana, or Ikenild Street, hard by"—the road to which we are introduced, in the second chapter of "The Return of the Native," as that along which the reddleman was driving Tamsin in his cart on the evening of her fruitless expedition to Anglebury. To gain this road we leave Dorchester as if Puddletown was the object of the journey. But we turn off to the right at the top of the first little hill, and now we are in the district of Mellstock, Lewstock, and the other hamlets associated with the story of "Under the Greenwood Tree." Those who have carefully studied Mr. Hardy's works will have no difficulty in identifying the churchyard of which we read in "Friends Beyond."

> "William Dewy, Tranter Reuben,
> Farmer Ledlow late at plough,
> Robert's kin, and John's, and Ned's,
> And the Squire, and Lady Susan, lie in Mellstock churchyard now."

Mellstock is a spot of which Mr. Hardy is obviously very fond, from the way in which he writes of it, and from the frequency with which he introduces it into the novels. It is especially associated with "Under the Greenwood Tree," the brightest, the happiest, and the most idyllic of the whole series; but, apart from this particular book, it is met with as a place connected with some of the characters in many of the other tales. Here Jude Fawley was born, and here Mop Ollamoor, the Fiddler of the Reels, lived. Close by is the brook

over which Angel Clare carried Tess and the other dairymaids on their way to church. The famous village choir is almost as much in evidence in "Under the Greenwood Tree" as the love-affairs of Dick and Fancy, so that here it may be permissible to digress for a moment into a note as to the disappearance of these old-time Church institutions.

Mr. Roberts, in his "Social History of the Southern Counties" (1856), says, "The last quarter of a century has seen the termination of the grand and miscellaneous performances of a choir in our parish churches provided with fiddle, clarionet, and every kind, we may almost affirm, of musical instruments. The incumbents were hardly aware what a task they had taken in hand when they meddled with these important personages. They hardly succeeded in many parishes till the leaders had died off. The 'church singers,' who played anthems, with selections 'from Handel, but mostly composed by themselves,' had a position in their parish. They had an admiring congregation. Their afternoon anthem was the theme of conversation at the church hatch before the service, and of inquiry and critical disquisition after. 'And did John,' one would ask, 'keep to his time?' 'Samuel was crowding very fitly until his string broked.' This was said after a performance difficult in all the categories in which difficulty—close up even to impossibility—may be found. And there was, I was about to say, a finale,

but it seemed endless ; it was a concluding portion, and a long one, of the anthem.

"Mary began an introductory recapitulation, in which she was ably followed, of the words, the subject of the composition, the masterpiece of one or many, if the choir lent a helping hand. It happened that Mary had to manage three full syllables, and all the cadences, and trills, and quavers connected therewith, as a solo. Then followed, through all the turns of the same intricate piece, Thomas, of tenor voice, who evolved his music, but did not advance to any elucidation of the subject of his concluding effort. He only dwelt upon the same syllables, at which the good minister was seen to smile and become restless, particularly when Jonathan took on with his deep bass voice, accompanied by the tones he drew from his bass viol. He, as best suited a bass singer, slowly repeated the syllables that Mary and Thomas had produced in so many ways, and with such a series of intonations, 'OUR—GREAT—SAL.' May some who tittered at this canonization of, as it were, a female saint, be forgiven ! Had they waited a few minutes, the grand union of all the performers in loud chorus would have enlightened them to the fact that the last syllable was only the first of one of three ending in 'VATION,' which would be loudly repeated by the whole choir till they appeared fairly tired out."

Mr. Roberts was, however, not quite correct as to the disappearance of the village choirs at the date

at which he wrote, for one at least survived for nearly forty years after the appearance of his book, and at his own end of the county, too. In the *Dorset County Chronicle*, Mr. Galpin gives an account of the disappearance of perhaps the last of these bands in 1893. It existed up to that date in Winterborne St. Martin, or Martinstown, on the Bridport side of Dorchester, and consisted of a thatcher, who was leader and played the clarionet, a farm-labourer who performed on the flute, and a shepherd to whom was confided the bass viol. Mr. Galpin, like others, is inclined to deplore the loss of a former element of picturesqueness from a not too picturesque country life, and concludes his account of the band by saying, "We are inclined to believe that, after all, suppression of these bands as relics of a barbarous age, and the introduction of organs often too large for our village churches, has not been an unmingled good. Reformation was needed, but not annihilation; for the practice of these wind and stringed instruments gave occupation and recreation to the peasant folk; their performances brightened village life; they added gaiety to the rustic wedding, they cheered the long Christmas evenings"

But we must linger no longer over Mellstock and its choir, but make our way along the road until, descending a hill, we see to the right a grey stone house in the midst of a fine park, studded with stately trees. This is Kingston House, the

KNAPWATER HOUSE.

CORNELL

original of the Knapwater House of "Desperate Remedies," Mr. Hardy's first novel. "The house was regularly and substantially built," says Mr. Hardy—the architect peeping out from under the mask of the novelist—"of clean grey freestone throughout, in that plainer fashion of Greek classicism which prevailed at the latter end of the last century, when the copyists called designers had grown weary of fantastic variations in the Roman orders. The main block approximated to a square on the ground plan, having a projection in the centre of each side, surmounted by a pediment. From each angle of the north side ran a line of buildings lower than the rest, turning inwards again at their farthest end, and forming within them a spacious open court, within which resounded an echo of astounding clearness. These erections were in their turn backed by ivy-covered ice-houses, laundries, and stables, the whole mass of subsidiary buildings being half buried beneath close-set shrubs and trees."

Keeping on past the turn to Bockhampton, we shortly come in sight of the first glimpse of Egdon Heath, in the shape of an elevation covered with heather, crowned by fir trees. But before we actually reach this, there is to be noticed on the left-hand side of the road, in a dip between two ridges, a pool, formerly open and much used for skating in the winter season, but now choked with rushes and thickly growing willow trees. This is Heedless

William's Pond, mentioned under that name in "The Fiddler of the Reels," and owing its title to a story of some careless carter who drove his vehicle into it and was drowned. One of the willow trees is said to have sprung from his whip-handle—an incident which Mr. Hardy has made use of, in a modified form, in the story of "A Tragedy of Two Ambitions."

The cottage immediately beyond this may be regarded as occupying fairly exactly the position of Bloom's End, the residence of Mrs. Yeobright, of Tamsin, and of Clym, and thus marking the entrance into that tract of country immortalized in "The Return of the Native." The rising ground on which this is situated is really that spur of Egdon which is nearest to Dorchester, and as we descend the slope on the opposite side, we shall do well to climb the fence on the right hand and walk out upon a spur of land which pushes its way, like a promontory, into the valley of the Frome. For here we obtain perhaps the most characteristic view of the Valley of Great Dairies, "that green trough of sappiness and humidity, the valley of the River Var." The windings of the stream can be seen amidst the verdurous meadows on which graze huge herds of kine; and just below us, now, alas! covered with a corrugated iron roof and otherwise sadly altered, is Norris Mill Farm, which, by situation and general characters, has the best right to be considered as the original of Talbothays, the scene of Tess's dairy

labours, and of her love-story with Angel Clare. It is true that the picture of Talbothays is a composite one, and that no one farm can claim the sole honour of having been its original; but we shall be quite safe in regarding this as at least the locality in which Dairyman Crick lived and laboured.

From this point of ground we may recall the fine comparison between the vale beneath us and that of Blakemore, which we have yet to visit—the comparison which Tess made when she saw "the verdant plain so well watered by the river Var or Froom," and, seeing it, burst out into the ancient Song of the Three Holy Children, "O ye Sun and Moon . . . O ye Stars . . . ye Green Things upon the Earth . . . ye Fowls of the Air . . . Beasts and Cattle . . . Children of Men . . . bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever!"

"It was intrinsically different," she thought, "from the Vale of Little Dairies, Blackmoor Vale, which, save during her disastrous sojourn at Trantridge, she had exclusively known till now. The world was drawn to a larger pattern here. The enclosures numbered fifty acres instead of ten, the farmsteads were more extended; the groups of cattle formed tribes hereabout; there only families. These myriads of cows, stretching under her eyes from the far east to the far west, outnumbered any she had ever seen at one glance before. The green lea was speckled as thickly with them as a canvas by Van Aisloot or Sallaert with burghers. The ripe hue of

the red and dun kine absorbed the evening sunlight, which the white-coated animals returned to the eye in rays almost dazzling, even at the distant elevation on which she stood. The bird's-eye perspective before her was not so luxuriantly beautiful, perhaps, as that other one which she knew so well; yet it was more cheering. It lacked the intensely blue atmosphere of the rival vale, and its heavy soils and scents; the new air was clear, bracing, ethereal. The river itself which nourished the grass and cows of these renowned dairies, flowed not like the streams in Blackmoor. Those were slow, silent, often turbid; flowing over beds of mud into which the incautious wader might sink and vanish unawares. The Var waters were clear as the pure River of Life shown to the Evangelist, rapid as the shadow of a cloud, with pebbly shallows that prattled to the sky all day long. There the water-flower was the lily; the crowfoot here."

We return to the road and descend the hill, to find on our right an unpromising-looking white house behind a thick hedge. This house, now a farm, is the original of the Quiet Woman, the inn kept by Damon Wildeve, who, though earning his living as a publican, endeavoured to retain some rags of his former dignity, by putting up a brass plate whereon he was styled "Engineer." Originally known as the Traveller's Rest, it afterwards changed its sign to that of the Duck, and under that appellation enjoyed no very brilliant reputation amongst

TALBOTHAYS AND THE VALE OF GREAT DAIRIES.

country inns. It now is the Duck Farm. But the visitor, who desires to realize it as it was at the period that the story was written, must suppose that the hedge which separates its garden from the road, and that which separates the road on its opposite side from the fields which have been retrieved from the heath, have both disappeared, for neither was at that time in existence. Any person, therefore, standing at the door of the inn would look straight over the heath up to that mound which seems to dominate it so absolutely at this point, the Rainbarrow of the story. It is, indeed, quite remarkable how this place of burial, one of so many of its kind scattered over the heath, stands out from the surrounding objects and constitutes the chief feature of the scenery, and one wonders what great chieftain or fair chieftainess was considered worthy of so commanding a place of sepulture. Here bonfires were annually lit, as the tale tells, until the general dulness of life extinguished these autumn celebrations.

Mr. Hardy thus describes the barrow and the adjacent heath as seen by Diggory Venn: "The scene before the reddleman's eyes was a gradual series of ascents from the level of the road backward into the heart of the heath. It embraced hillocks, pits, ridges, acclivities, one behind the other, till all was finished by a high hill cutting against the still light sky. The traveller's eye hovered about these things for a time, and finally settled upon one noteworthy object there. It was a barrow. This

bossy projection of earth above its natural level occupied the loftiest ground of the loneliest height that the heath contained. Although from the vale it appeared but as a wart on an Atlantean brow, its actual bulk was great. It formed the pole and axis of this heathery world."

The visitor will naturally look for Shadwater Weir in the immediate vicinity of the Quiet Woman, but if he desires to see the fateful pool in which Eustacia Vye and Damon Wildeve ended the fitful fever of their lives, he must make his way over several fields at the back of the former inn until he comes to the river, where he will find a deep pool, once a weir, such as might well have been the scene of the tragedy. And as he makes his way back again to the road he will again be struck, as he sees Rainbarrow standing out against the sky-line above the roof of the Quiet Woman, with its air of sovereignty over the adjacent slopes and valleys.

We must now leave the neighbourhood of the former inn and make our way along the highway, until we come to a road upon the left which penetrates into the heart of this part of Egdon. About a quarter of a mile along it we reach a spot where several sturdy holly bushes stand on either side of the way. Now, if we look up on our left to the heights crowned with a line of fir trees, we shall see a kind of bastion projecting from them and overlooking a green valley which leads directly up the

slope. On this prominent shelf of land Mr. Hardy placed Mistover Knap, the house of Captain Vye. Here we shall do well to rest a while and absorb an impression of Egdon ; for though the heaths of which it is composed are of great extent, and stretch for a number of miles further in the direction which we have yet to pursue, we are now in the heart of

MISTOVER KNAP.

that portion which Mr. Hardy had chiefly in his mind when writing the tale of "The Return of the Native." And while we rest we may read the description which he himself gives us of the scene upon which we are gazing.

"The most thoroughgoing ascetic could feel that he had a natural right to wander on Egdon ;

he was keeping within the line of legitimate indulgence when he laid himself open to influences such as these. Colours and beauties so far subdued were, at least, the birthright of all. Only in summer days of highest feather did its mood touch the level of gaiety. Intensity was more usually reached by way of the solemn than by way of the brilliant, and such a sort of intensity was often arrived at during winter darkness, tempests, and mists. Then Egdon was aroused to reciprocity; for the storm was its lover, and the wind its friend. Then it became the home of strange phantoms; and it was found to be the hitherto unrecognized original of those wild regions of obscurity which are vaguely felt to be compassing us about in midnight dreams of flight and disaster, and are never thought of after the dream till revived by scenes like this.

"It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature; neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame; but, like man, slighted and enduring; and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived apart, solitude seemed to look out of its countenance. It had a homely face, suggesting tragical possibilities. This obscure, obsolete, superseded country figures in Domesday. Its condition is recorded therein as that of heathy, furzy, briary wilderness—'Bruaria.' Then follows the length and breadth in leagues; and, though some uncertainty exists as to the exact

extent of this ancient lineal measure, it appears from the figures that the area of Egdon down to the present day has but little diminished. 'Turbaria Bruaria'—the right of cutting heath-turf—occurs in charters relating to the district. 'Overgrown with heth and mosse,' says Leland of the same dark sweep of country.

"Here at least were intelligible facts regarding landscape—far-reaching proofs productive of genuine satisfaction. The untameable, Ishmaelitish thing that Egdon now was it had always been. Civilization was its enemy; and ever since the beginning of vegetation its soil had worn the same antique brown dress, the natural and invariable garment of the particular formation. In its venerable one coat lay a certain vein of satire on human vanity in clothes. A person on a heath in raiment of modern cut and colours has more or less an anomalous look. We seem to want the oldest and simplest human clothing where the clothing of the earth is so primitive.

"To recline on a stump of thorn in the central valley of Egdon, between afternoon and night, as now, where the eye could reach nothing of the world outside the summits and shoulders of heath-land which filled the whole circumference of its glance, and to know that everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead, gave ballast to the mind adrift on change, and harassed by the irrepressible New. The great inviolate place had an ancient

permanence which the sea cannot claim. Who can say of a particular sea that it is old? Distilled by the sun, kneaded by the moon, it is renewed in a year, in a day, or in an hour. The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, the villages, and the people changed, yet Egdon remained. Those surfaces were neither so steep as to be destructible by weather, nor so flat as to be the victims of floods and deposits. With the exception of an aged highway, and of a still more aged barrow—themselves almost crystallized to natural products by long continuance—even the trifling irregularities were not caused by pickaxe, plough, or spade, but remained as the very finger-touches of the last geological change."

Egdon is a portion of Dorset over which the lover of wild nature will do well to linger; its "abrupt slopes" and its dark valleys will afford him a series of views varying in character from the confined to the spacious, but always satisfying, always new. It is a place from which those who have learnt to love it tear themselves with difficulty, and to which they return time after time with ever-intensified feelings of delight.

Returning to the main road, we continue on our way until the cross roads are reached. On the left, fifty yards or so up the road, is Tincleton, the Stickleford of the novels where Carline Aspent, the victim of Mop Ollamoor, the Fiddler of the Reels, lived, and near which Venn, the ex-reddleman,

had his dairy of cows. If we wish to see the kind of dairy-farm which this district produces, we can do so by turning down on the right, instead of going up into Tincleton. This road takes us down into the Frome valley, the river here deserving all the praises for its clearness which Mr. Hardy has bestowed upon it. It is crossed by a little bridge whereon the traveller should rest and look back upon the way by which he has come. The huge meadow, usually occupied by a magnificent herd of cows, is called White Mead, and others like to it lie on every side, each with its troop of kine. In the distance Egdon rises up against the sky-line, its dark slopes in strange contrast to the smiling verdure of the vale. It is better now to turn back and regain the road which has been left, though by continuing that which crosses White Mead and the river Frome many scenes of beauty may be reached. A short distance off, on this latter road, is Woodsford Castle, that fine fourteenth-century house which is waiting to be introduced into some future Wessex novel. And still further, beyond a little hamlet with the singular title of Dick o' the Banks, is more of Egdon in the shape of Ower and Warmwell Heaths. If the visitor looks about, he may see in this part of the heath as curious a place of habitation as one can well imagine—an old third-class railway coach perched upon stone supports, covered with creepers, and lodged in a gravel-pit, which serves as a home for a bee-master and his family. It is well worth while on

another occasion to prolong this walk over the heath to Warmwell Cross, and thence return either to Weymouth or Dorchester, for in no part perhaps will scenes of greater beauty be found than along this road.

Beyond Tincleton Cross, on the main road, from which we have temporarily diverged, is the hamlet of Clyffe, with its great open field, and here on the left a road diverges which becomes a steep narrow lane, and leads up to another most delightful part of Egdon, whence Affpuddle may be reached by a lonely grassy path leading one through ferns and brambles to the cross roads mentioned in a former chapter. Beyond Clyffe our original road makes its way across Egdon without passing any other spot of interest in connection with the novels, until Wareham is reached.

WOLFETON.

CHAPTER IX

CASTERBRIDGE TO SHERTON ABBAS

TO reach Sherborne, the road from Dorchester must be taken by which Farfrae was about to leave on his way to Bristol, when dissuaded by Henchard. As the ramparts of the town are left, the road crosses a bridge over the Frome and passes close under Pommery, whose earthworks are well seen from this point of view. About a mile from Dorchester, on the right-hand side of the road, and set back some little distance from it, is the fine old house of Wolfeton, for many years the seat of the powerful Dorset family of Trenchard, and the scene of the story of the Lady Penelope in "A Group of Noble Dames."

"In going out of Casterbridge by the low-lying road which eventually conducts to the town of Ivell,

you see on the right hand an ivied manor-house, flanked by battlemented towers, and more than usually distinguished by the size of its many mullioned windows. Though still of good capacity, the building is much reduced from its original grand proportions; it has, moreover, been shorn of the fair estate which once appertained to its lord, with the exception of a few acres of park-land immediately around the mansion. This was formerly the seat of the ancient and knightly family of the Drenghards, or Drenkhards, now extinct in the male line, whose name, according to the local chronicles, was interpreted to mean *Strenuus Miles*, *vel Potator*, though certain members of the family were averse to the latter signification, and a duel was fought by one of them on that account, as is well known."

In the year 1400 one John Jurdaine married the heiress of John Chantmarle, and with her had this property, which, after passing through the hands of that great Wessex family, the Mohuns, came into the possession of the Trenchards. They were a family of great esteem in the county from an early period, as we learn from the positions which they occupied, and the mention which is made of them in the records of various towns. The Sir Thomas of the period built the tower of the neighbouring church of Charminster, in 1500. It is marked with his cognizance, two T's, the same monogram existing in various places in the interior of the church, where are also many tombs of this family.

ABBOT'S CERNEL.

In the end of the same century the Sir George Trenchard of the day was of sufficient importance to be propitiated by gifts from the Corporation of Lyme at the public cost. The records of these which still exist show us the kind of objects which were then considered worthy of acceptance by a county magnate.

In 1593 he had a box of marmalade and six oranges, for all the world as if he were a little boy of the present day going back to school, which benefaction cost the Corporation seven shillings. Two years later, the Mayor of Lyme records, "Given to Sir George Trenchard a fair box of marmalade gilted, a barrel of conserves, oranges and lemons and potatoes, 22*s.* 10*d.*"

At the time of the Great Rebellion the Trenchards took the Parliamentary side, and were much concerned in the siege of Corfe Castle. At this date there were in the great hall at Wolfeton a number of carved figures representing the kings of England, in connection with which Aubrey relates the following incident in his "Miscellanies:" "The day that the Long Parliament began, 1641, the Sceptre fell out of the figure of King Charles in wood, in Sir Thomas Trenchard's hall at Wullich, in Dorset, as they were at dinner in the parlour: Justice Hunt then dined there."

If the list of names of those members of the House of Commons who had enriched themselves, "contrary to the Selfe-denying Ordinance," is to be

believed, Sir Thomas was not very scrupulous as to how he made his money, for its second century contains the following entry: "4. Sir Thomas Trenchard had given him £1200 thus; hee married his daughter to a malignant, gave security for payment of £1200 portion, beside Parliamentary courtesies; got his sonne-in-law sequestred; discovers the debt and hath it given him for his fidelity to the State—a very Parliamentary way to pay portions."

The Penelope of the story was second daughter and co-heir of Thomas, Lord Darcy of Chichester, Viscount Colchester and Lord Rivers. She married (1) George Trenchard, a widower, ob. s.p. vitâ patris; (2) Sir John Gage, Bart.; (3) Sir William Hervy.

Some distance beyond Wolfeton the road divides, that on the left going to Maiden Newton, and that on the right past Charminster to Cerne and Sherborne. The latter, which we must follow, works its way gradually upwards along the valley of the Cerne between high downs, on either side of which creep upwards to the sky-line the roads of which Barnes sang—

> "The zwellèn downs, wi' chalky tracks
> A-climmèn up their zunny backs,
> Do hide green meëds an' zedgy brooks,
> An' clumps o' trees wi' glossy rooks,
> An' hearty vo'k to laugh an' zing,
> An' parish churches in a string,
> Wi' tow'rs o' merry bells to ring,
> An' white roads up athirt the hills."

We shortly reach Cerne Abbas, called Abbot's Cernel in the novels—one of its old names being Cernel. It was a celebrated monastic foundation, founded A.D. 987 by Æthelmar, Earl of Devon and Cornwall, on the site of a hermitage established by Ædwold, brother of Eadmund the Martyr. Amongst its abbots, the first and the most distinguished was Ælfric, the writer of the celebrated Homilies, who is said by Dean Hook and Freeman to have been Archbishop of Canterbury, though it seems certain that this was a totally different person. An old house in the now decayed and dirty-looking little village appears to have been the home of the family from which George Washington sprang. A fine tithe-barn, the ancient church, and the magnificent gatehouse of the abbey should all be visited. Alec Stoke D'Urberville was on his way to preach at Cernel, when he met Tess on Batcombe Down. It was also one of the places at which Betty Dornel, or Reynard, met her husband, at a time when the mother of "the First Countess of Wessex" had set her face against such encounters. On the hill above the village is a remarkable figure of a giant, carved in the chalk, and holding a club in his hand, of which Criswick, in his "Walk round Dorchester," states that "vulgar tradition makes this figure commemorate the destruction of a giant, who, having feasted on some sheep in Blackmore, and laid himself down to sleep on this hill, was pinioned down like another Gulliver, and killed by the enraged peasants on the

spot, who immediately traced his dimensions for the information of posterity." It is mentioned in the "Crusted Characters," where Andrew, the fraudulent fiddler, is said to have known "no more of music than the Cerne giant."

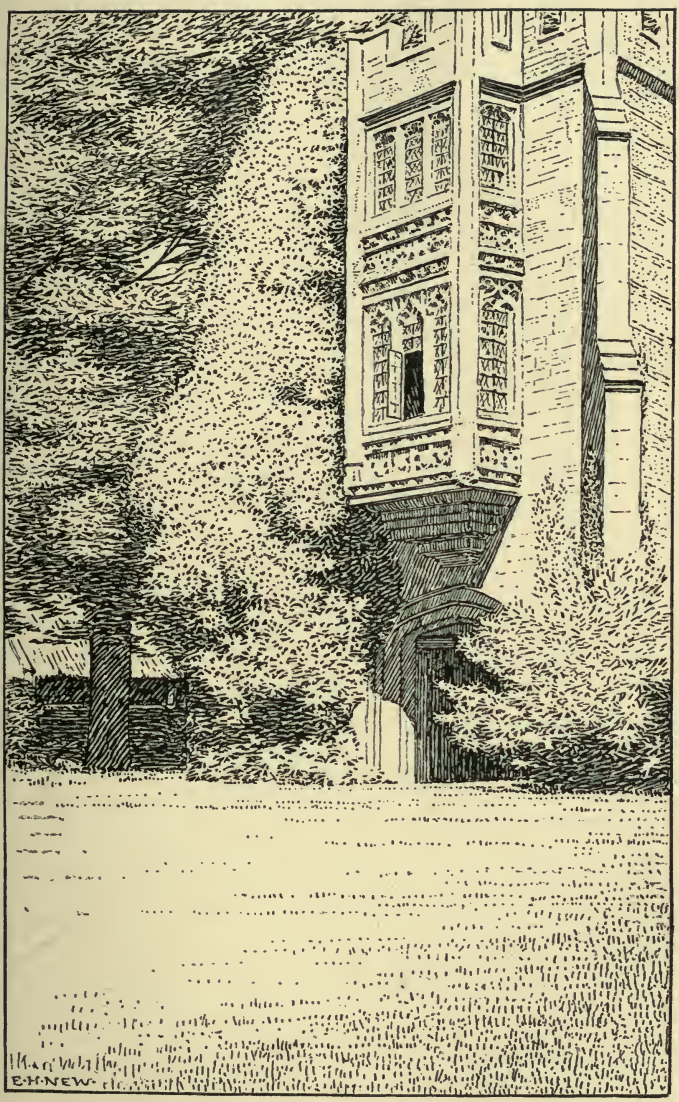
One of the upland cottages on the down above Cerne, and near "the forsaken coach-road running almost in a meridional line from Bristol to the south shore of England," by which one can also travel from Dorchester to Sherborne, is the original of Higher Crowstairs in the tale of "The Three Strangers." Readers of that story will remember the "huge vessel of brown ware, having its upper edge worn away like a threshold by the rub of whole generations of thirsty lips that had gone the way of all flesh, and bearing the following inscription burnt upon its rotund side in yellow letters—

'THERE IS NO FUN
UNTIL I CUM,'"

which took a prominent place in the christening rejoicings, and may be glad to know that they can see an ancient vessel used on similar occasions, in the Salisbury Museum, on which is inscribed—

"HERE . IS . THE . GEST . OF . THE . BARLY . KORNE . GLAD . HAM . I . THE . CILD . IS . BORN. I.G. 1692."

The road beyond Cerne leads still further up the valley, past Minterne Magna, the Great Hintock



ABBOT'S CERNEL—THE ABBEY GATEWAY.

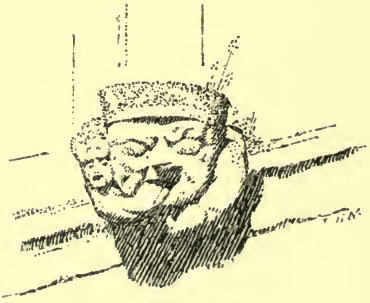
of "The Woodlanders," where Giles Winterborne was buried. Here, however, one looks in vain for Mrs. Charmond's house; for, though there are several houses in the neighbourhood, which in one way or another might have served the purposes of the tale, the actual edifice with its surroundings is in another part of the county, and will be described in a later chapter. Beyond the village of Minterne, the road traverses a fine avenue of trees, turns to the right, reaches the highest point, and the next moment brings into view a scene which Mr. Hardy is never tired of lauding—Blackmore Vale, stretching almost as far as the eye can see. The comparison which Mr. Hardy makes between this vale and that of the Frome has already been quoted, and its accuracy will be at once recognized by those familiar with the two scenes. In another place he speaks of the northern of the two vales, above which we are now standing, as one "whose acquaintance is best made by viewing it from the summits of the hills that surround it, except perhaps during the droughts of summer. An unguided ramble into its recesses in bad weather is apt to engender dissatisfaction with its narrow, tortuous, and miry ways. This fertile and sheltered tract of country, in which the fields are never brown and the springs never dry, is bounded on the south by the bold chalk ridge that embraces the prominences of Hambledon Hill, Bulbarrow, Nettlecombe-Tout, Dogbury, High Stoy, and Bubb Down.

The traveller from the coast, who, after plodding northward for a score of miles over calcareous downs and corn-lands, suddenly reaches the verge of one of these escarpments, is surprised and delighted to behold, extended like a map beneath him, a country differing absolutely from that which he has passed through. Behind him the hills are open, the sun blazes down upon fields so large as to give an unenclosed character to the landscape, the lanes are white, the hedges low and splashed, the atmosphere colourless. Here, in the valley, the world seems to be constructed upon a smaller and more delicate scale; the fields are mere paddocks, so reduced that from this height their hedgerows appear a network of dark green threads overspreading the paler green of the grass. The atmosphere beneath is languorous, and is so tinged with azure that what artists call the middle distance partakes also of that hue, while the horizon beyond is of deepest ultramarine. Arable lands are few and limited; with but slight exceptions the prospect is a broad rich mass of grass and trees, mantling minor hills and dales within the major. Such is the Vale of Blackmore."

There is an old legend connected with this dale to which it owes its alternative name of the Vale of White Hart. Hutchins says, "It was called the forest of White Hart from the following event, related by Camden and Coker. King Henry III., hunting in this forest, among several deer he had

run down, spared the life of a beautiful white hart, which afterwards Thomas de la Lynde, a neighbouring gentleman of ancient descent and special note, with his companions, hunted and killed at a bridge, since from thence called King-Stag Bridge, in the parish of Pulham. The king, highly offended at it, not only punished them with imprisonment and grievous fine, but severely taxed all their lands which they then held, the owners of which yearly, ever since to this day, pay a sum of money by way of fine or amerciament, into the Exchequer, called White Hart Silver, in memory of which the county needeth no better remembrance than this annual payment. The forest for some time lost its ancient name, and was called the forest of the White Hart ; and the posterity of Thomas de la Lynde, instead of the arms of Hartley, which they then bore, as having married their heir, gave ever after three white harts' heads in a field gules." There are several mistakes about this statement, for it was Sir John de la Lynde, bailiff of the forest of Blackmore, temp. Henry III., who must have been the hero if the tale were true. Considerable doubt is, however, thrown upon it by the fact that neither the Pipe Roll nor any other contemporary document contains an account of such a fine. Finally, the arms of the family of Sir John were a cross engrailed or, lozengy, and not as above stated. There was, however, some payment called White Hart Silver, for Fuller says that he himself has paid

the money though he never tasted the venison, and a tax under that name was payable in the time of Henry VII., but it was on lands at Winfrith, some distance from the vale now in question ; lands, too, which never belonged to the family of De la Lynde. Leland says of it, "This forest streachid from Ivelle unto the quarters of Shaftesbyri, and touchid with Gillingham forest that is nere Shaftesbyri. It was defforested in K. William the Conqueror's time, at the which tyme, and long afore, were the Thornhulles of Thornhul, and the Leustons of Leuston, with de la Lyne, in estimation about Blakemore."



GARGOYLE ON ABBOT'S CERNEL CHURCH.

SHERTON ABBAS—THE CASTLE.

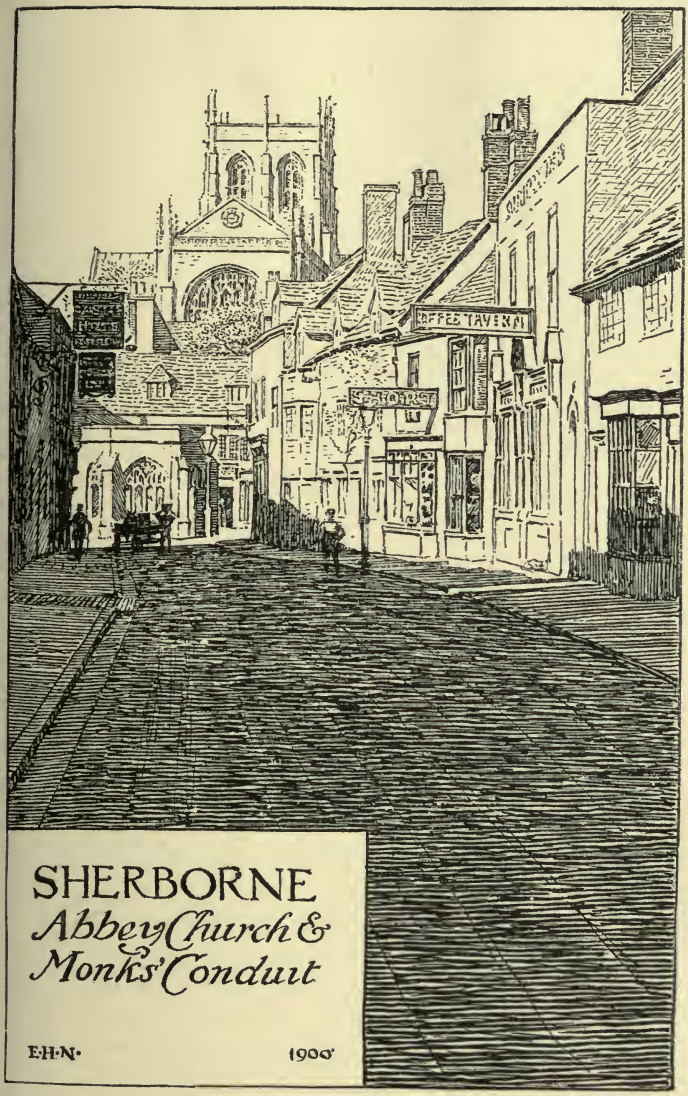
CHAPTER X

CASTERBRIDGE TO SHERTON ABBAS—*continued*

IN dealing with the beautiful Vale of Blackmore, it must not be forgotten that it was the birthplace of Barnes, the Dorset poet, and that all his life through he loved it with an abiding affection and made it the scene of most of his poems. His daughter and biographer says of it, "The Vale of Blackmore is a kind of Tempé—a happy valley—so shut in by its sheltering hills, that up to quite modern times the outer world had sent few echoes to disturb its serene and rustic quiet. Life in Blackmore was practically the life of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries until the nineteenth was actually far advanced. The farmer helped to till

his own lands, his wife did not disdain to churn her butter and curd her cheeses, and the days passed in homely and rustic duties, which to our mind have a sweet and old-world charm. The family meals were eaten in the oak-beamed old kitchen, where was the 'settle and the girt wood vire,' with the hams and bacon hanging overhead;" and she proceeds to point out that the account which her father contributed early in the century of the Harvest Home to "Hone's Year-Book" was based on what he had seen as a boy in his native vale. The following extract from that account may fittingly be introduced into these notes on Blackmore:—

"When the last load was ricked, the labourers, male and female, the swarthy reaper, and the sunburnt hay-maker, the saucy boy who had not seen twelve summers, and the stiff, horny-handed old mower who had borne the toil of fifty, all made a happy group, and went with singing and loud laughing to the 'harvest-home supper' at the farmhouse, where they were expected by the good mistress, dressed in a quilted petticoat and a linsey-wolsey apron, with shoes fastened by large silver buckles which extended over her foot like a pack-saddle on a donkey. The dame and her husband welcomed them to a supper of good wholesome food—a round of beef and a piece of bacon, and perhaps the host and hostess had gone so far as to kill a fowl or two, or stick a turkey which had fattened in the wheat yard. This plain English fare was eaten from



SHERTON ABBAS.

wooden trenchers, by the side of which were put little cups of horn filled with beer or cider. When the cloth was removed, one of the men, putting forth his large hand, like the gauntlet of an armed knight, would grasp his horn of beer, and standing on a pair of legs which had long outgrown the largest holes in the village stocks, and with a voice which, if he had not been speaking a dialect of the English language, you might have thought came from the deep-seated lungs of a lion, he would propose the health of the farmer in the following lines :—

'Here's a health unto our maister,
The founder of the feast,
And I hope to God wi' all my heart
His soul in heaven mid rest;

'That everything mid prosper
That ever he taik in hand,
Vor we be all his sarvants,
And all at his command.'

After this would follow a course of jokes, anecdotes, and songs, in some of which the whole of the company joined, without attention to the technicalities of counter-point, bass, tenor, and treble, common chords and major thirds; but each singing the air and pitching in at the key that best fitted his voice, making a medley of big and little sounds, like the lowing of oxen and the low bleating of old ewes, mixed up with the shrill pipings of the lambs at a fair."

The vale of Blackmore may perhaps best be seen from one of the eminences which overhang it, Bubb Down, High Stoy, or Shaftesbury, but the cyclist or pedestrian who wishes to make its nearer acquaintance may be recommended to take, at the foot of the hill on which we have been delaying such an unconscionable length of time, the road which leads to Wooton Glanville, and thence through Bishop's Caundle to Marnhull and Shaftesbury. By so doing he will not only see some of the places especially connected with the Wessex novels, but also gain a good idea of the vale, and if he can select a warm day in the early autumn, when the trees of the orchards, which are to be found everywhere throughout it, are covered with apples, then his visual and his olfactory senses will be equally delighted by the feast which will be provided for them. It is a corner of this district which is the scene of "The Woodlanders," and the road at the foot of the hill, which turns to the right, and is described on the sign-post as leading to the Giant's Head, may fairly be taken to be the threshold of this country. Evidences of the trade in wood by which this part of the world largely lives are to be seen everywhere, and the largest wood-yard of the neighbourhood is about a mile up the road last mentioned. In actual characteristics the village of Little Hintock more closely resembles Melbury Osmund, as those who visit it will scarcely fail to notice, and, indeed, that village was clearly in

Mr. Hardy's mind when writing the story, for he gives its name to the timber-merchant of the tale, and tells us that the church was dedicated to St. Osmund, which is actually the case, as its suffix shows, in that village. But Middlemarsh supplies the scene of the tale, and was the spot of which Mr. Hardy was thinking when he wrote that fine poem, "In a Wood"—

"Pale beech and pine tree blue,
Set in one clay,
Bough to bough, cannot you
Bide out your day?
When the rains skim and skip,
Why mar sweet comradeship,
Blighting with poison-drip
Neighbourly spray?

"Heart-halt and spirit-lame,
City-opprest,
Unto this wood I came
As to a nest;
Dreaming that sylvan peace
Offered the harrowed ease—
Nature a soft release
From men's unrest.

"But, having entered in,
Great growths and small
Show them to men akin—
Combatants all!
Sycamore shoulders oak,
Bines the slim sapling yoke,
Ivy-spun halters choke
Elms stout and tall.

"Touches from ash, O wych,
Sting you like scorn!
You, too, brave hollies, twitch
Sidelong from thorn.
Even the rank poplars bear
Illy a rival's air,
Cankering in black despair
If overborne.

"Since, then, no grace I find
Taught me of trees,
Turn I back to my kind,
Worthy as these.
There at least smiles abound,
There discourse trills around,
There, now and then, are found
Life-loyalties."

Beyond Middlemarsh, still skirted by trees, the road crosses the level valley, passing Holnest, with its mausoleum of marvellous hideousness, until at the top of a gentle hill the traveller looks down upon the little town of Sherborne, with its ancient abbey and castle.

As long ago as the days of King Ina, in A.D. 705, Sherborne was the seat of a bishopric, and the first occupant of the see was no less a man than the celebrated St. Ealdhelm. William of Malmesbury very likely voiced the general opinion, when he expressed his surprise and disgust at this choice of Sherborne as the seat of a bishop. He says of it that "it is pleasant neither by multitudes of inhabitants, nor by beauty of position," and adds that "it is wonderful, and almost shameful, that a

SHERTON ABBAS—THE ABBEY.

bishop's see should have remained for so many ages." As a matter of fact, it remained there until 1078, when Herman removed it to Old Sarum. But though the bishop's chair was removed, the Benedictine monastery continued, the bishop of Sarum being for some time its abbot, and the church from which the Benedictines were driven at the dissolution of the abbeys is now the chief glory of the little town. Where a secular or ordinary parish church and a regular church attached to some religious order co-existed in the same small town, they sometimes were completely detached from one another, as was the case at Evesham; sometimes they were connected and built side by side, as at Leominster; and sometimes, as here, one was built at the end of the other. But whatever position they occupied with regard to one another, their proximity was bound to lead to disputes from time to time, as one or the other party supposed its privileges to be infringed.

Now, at Sherborne, the parochial church of Alhalows, or All Saints, as we should now call it, was situated at the west end of the abbey church, and connected with it by a doorway. Parts of its walls can still be seen, though most of the edifice, including its tower, which must have looked rather curious behind the great abbey church, has disappeared. The parish authorities complained that the monks had narrowed the door between the two churches, and the monks retorted that the bells of

the secular church were rung at unnecessary hours for the purpose of disturbing their brief slumbers. The feud went on increasing in violence until at last, as Leland puts it, "the variance grew to a plain sedition, until a priest of Alhalows shot a shaft with fire into the top of that part of St. Mary Church that divided the east part that the monks used from that the townsmen used; and this partition chancing at that time to be thatched in, the roof was set on fire, and consequently all the whole church, the lead and bells melted, was defaced." It was afterwards rebuilt in the Perpendicular style, and possesses one of the best—perhaps the very best—example of fan-vaulting in the country. It was in the aisles of this stately church that Grace and Giles Winterborne walked and talked about their misty prospects of future happiness. It is not the abbey only, however, which is associated with the story of "The Woodlanders," for the whole of the town is rich in reminiscences of that book, from the market-place where Giles waited, apple tree in hand, for Grace's return from school, to the inns associated with several of the chief incidents in the book. Visitors will look in vain for the old Earl of Wessex Hotel, which was probably drawn from the fine old hostelry, the New Inn, now no more. The Castle was from early times the seat of the bishop, and was confirmed to the see by William the Conqueror. It is said that St. Osmund set a curse upon whoever should separate the castle from the see to which it belonged, and this legend has been

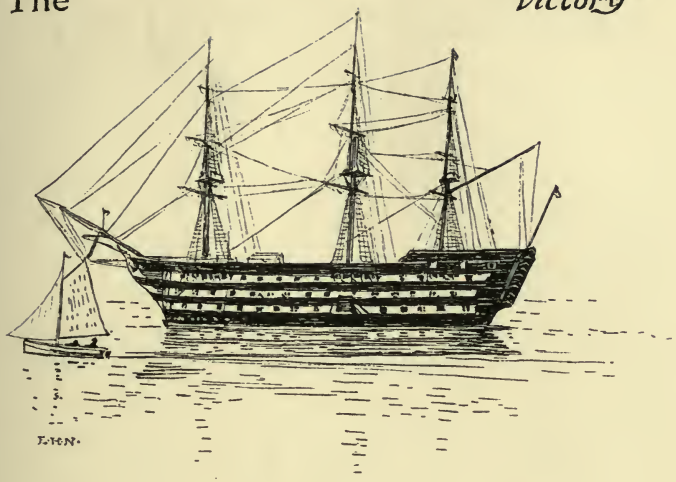
celebrated in verse by Crowe, a Dorsetshire poet who flourished in the early part of this century, and wrote a topographical poem called "Lewesdon Hill," of which Rogers thought so much that, as he says in his "Table-Talk," "when travelling in Italy I made two authors my constant study for versification, Milton and Crowe." As samples of the two most recent poets of the county have been given, it may be curious to contrast with their efforts that of their earlier brother. Its effect is intended to be intensified by the plentiful use of capitals.

"That envious ridge looks on
To SHERBORNE's ancient towers and rich domains,
The noble DIGBY's mansion, where he dwells
Inviolate and fearless of thy CURSE ;
War-glutted OSMOND, superstitious Lord,
Who to Heaven's justice for a bloody life
Mad'st thy presumptuous bargain ; giving more
Than thy just having, to redeem thy guilt ;
And daredst bid th' Almighty to become
The minister of thy CURSE. But sure it fell
With sacred vengeance pointed on the head
Of many a bold usurper : chief on thine
(Favourite of fortune once, but last her thrall),
Accomplished RALEIGH ! in that lawless day,
When, like a goodly hart, thou wert beset
With crafty bloodhounds, lurching for thy life,
While as they feign'd to chase thee fairly down ;
And that foul Scot, the minion-kissing king,
Pursu'd with havoc in the tyrannous hunt."

This is no place to discuss the history of the old castle whose ruins still remain, but one event must be mentioned, since it forms the foundation of the

tale of Lady Baxby in "The Group of Noble Dames." History says that during the great rebellion the castle was being besieged by the Parliamentary forces under the command of the Earl of Bedford. Tradition adds that at this time his sister, wife of George Lord Digby, son of the Earl of Bristol, was one of the occupants of the castle. The brother, wishing to spare his sister's life, sent a messenger to her to warn her to quit the building, as it was his intention to destroy it. The story goes on to relate that she at once took a horse and rode over to her brother's tent, which was situated in the camp now called Bedford's Castle, and told him that "if he persisted in his intention he should find his sister's bones buried in the ruins." The result of her action was that the Earl, rather than endanger his sister's life, temporarily raised the siege—at least, so the tale would lead us to believe.

The "Victory"



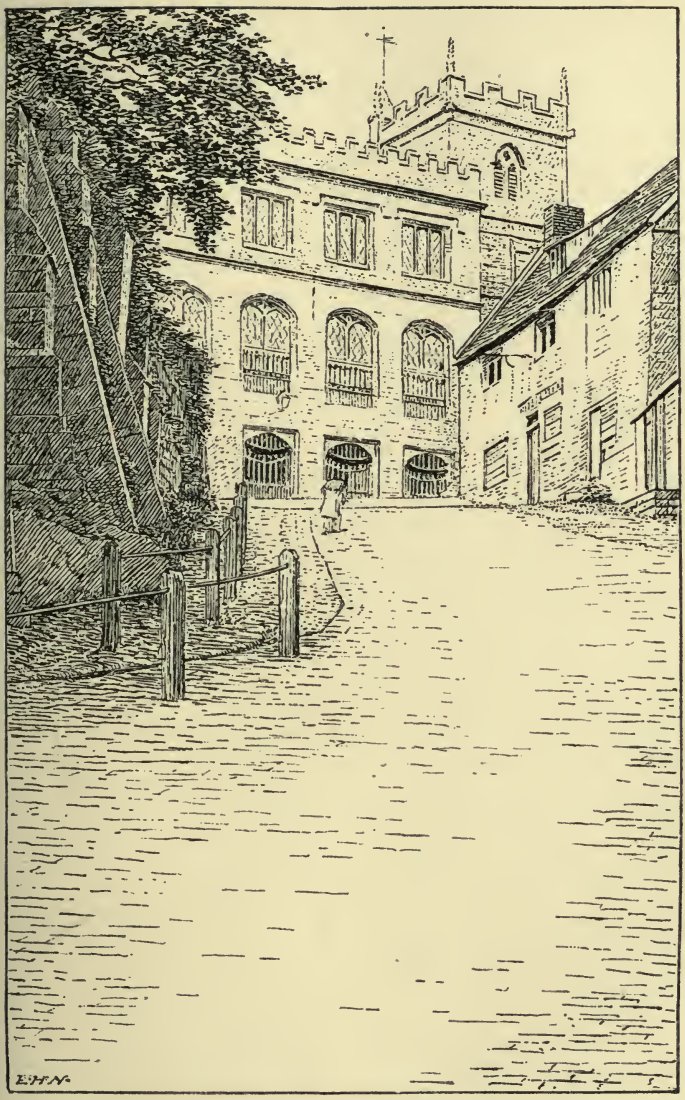
CHAPTER XI

CASTERBRIDGE TO SHASTON BY WAY OF SHOTTSFORD FORUM

THIS road has already been traversed, in an earlier chapter, as far as Puddletown, and need not, therefore, be again described. Beyond that village it reaches next Milborne St. Andrews, the Millpond St. Jude's where the maltster of "Far from the Madding Crowd" spent "fourteen times eleven months" of his long career. There is nothing to detain the traveller here, but if he can spare the time he should certainly not fail to diverge from the main road in order to visit Miton

Abbey, a few miles to the north. It is the Middleton Abbey—Middleton is one of the old names of the place—at which Mrs. Charmond stopped during the progress of her intrigue with Fitzpiers. When one enters the village one is at once struck with its unlikeness to the ordinary English hamlet. The houses form a single straight street; they are all of the same age and design, and every pair is separated from its next pair by a fine horse-chestnut tree. The whole effect is striking, though the design of the cottages cannot be commended. The explanation of this curious condition is that in 1786 the first Earl of Dorchester deported bodily the entire village population from their ancient habitations which clustered round the abbey, his intended mansion, to the present spot. He built for the people a complete village, with a church and an almshouse, and having thus provided for them, he destroyed every vestige of the original hamlet. The abbey itself is situated in a deep valley amongst fine trees, and occupies the site of a religious house founded by Æthelstan in or about 933. The church, empty, swept, and garnished, is of great beauty, and well worthy of much greater interest than has hitherto been shown in it; whilst on a little eminence hard by is a tiny Norman chapel dedicated to St. Catherine, and reminding the visitor of the similar but larger edifice with the same dedication at Abbotsbury.

On the other side of Milborne St. Andrews, that



SHASTON—COLD HILL.

is, to the south, is the camp of Weatherbury, which the traveller will find it interesting to visit. It seems likely that Mr. Hardy took the name of his village in "Far from the Madding Crowd" from this place, and it certainly was employed in part as the model for Swithin St. Cleeve's observatory in "Two on a Tower." To reach the camp one has to traverse a large field, and the space between the outer and inner earthworks, a space of unusual width, is ploughland. The whole of the interior of the camp is overgrown with tall trees, many of them firs, and in the centre of them is an obelisk surmounted by a round ball. Mr. Clive Holland managed to see this from the outside of the camp, for he includes a photograph of the earthworks and its trees, in which the top of the tower is visible, amongst the other charming views of the Hardy country which he has published in the American "Bookman." Personally I must confess that I was not fortunate enough to find the point of view from which this picture was taken, and could only discover the tower by penetrating into the wood, where it is to be found without the slightest difficulty. There are at least four of these towers or obelisks in Dorset—at Charborough, Weatherbury, Moreton, and Thornhill, and it is out of the first two that the tower of the novel has been evolved. As will become evident at a later point, in most respects it is taken from that at Charborough, for Lady Constantine would have probably never noticed the Weatherbury tower had her house

been near it, whilst the first mentioned is a landmark for miles around. Moreover, structurally, that at Charborough could alone have been used for the purposes of an observatory, being the only one which has a staircase inside and a platform on top. One feature alone has been taken from the Weatherbury monument—the other two are not connected with the story in any way—and that is its situation within a camp, which again is placed in the centre of a large field. "The central feature of the middle distance, as they beheld it, was a circular isolated hill, of no great elevation, which placed itself in strong chromatic contrast with a wide acreage of surrounding arable by being covered with fir trees. The trees were all of one size and age, so that their tips assumed the precise curve of the hill they grew upon. This pine-clad protuberance was yet further marked out from the general landscape by having on its summit a tower in the form of a classical column, which, though partly immersed in the plantation, rose above the tree-tops to a considerable height." The first part of this description applies to Weatherbury, the second to Charborough. "The fir-shrouded hilltop was (according to some antiquaries) an old Roman camp—if it were not (as others insisted) an old British castle, or (as the rest swore) an old Saxon field of Witenagemote—with remains of an outer and an inner vallum, a winding path leading up between their overlapping ends by an easy ascent." This again is Weatherbury, as the

visitor will at once recognize, and the further description, save as regards the structure of the tower, may well have been taken from the same place. "The gloom and solitude which prevailed round the base were remarkable. The sob of the environing trees was here expressively manifest, and, moved by the light breeze, their thin straight stems rocked in seconds, like inverted pendulums, while some boughs and twigs rubbed the pillar's sides, or occasionally clicked in catching each other. Below the level of their summits the masonry was lichen-stained and mildewed, for the sun never pierced that moaning cloud of blue-black vegetation. Pads of moss grew in the joints of the stonework, and here and there shade-loving insects had engraved on the mortar patterns of no human style or meaning, but curious and suggestive."

Leaving Milborne St. Andrews, the next place to be reached is Blandford Forum, of which an admirable view will be obtained from the top of the hill from which one descends to the town.

> "The Stour-bordered Forum,
> Where Legions had wayfared,
> And where the slow river upglasses
> Its green canopy,"

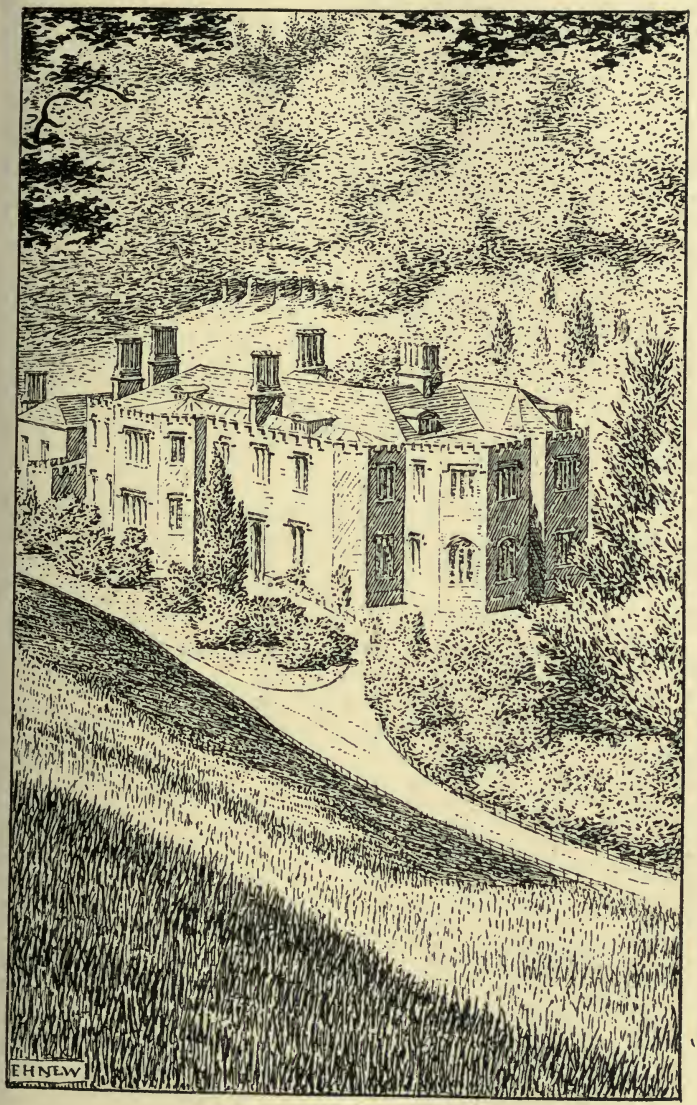
is, in spite of its suffix, which raises high hopes of antiquities to be seen, a perfectly modern—or rather, one ought to say, Georgian—market town. It owes the loss of its antiquities to two serious fires, which,

as at Dorchester, cleared off, no doubt, much that antiquarians and lovers of the picturesque would give a good deal to restore. Blandford was one of the last country towns in which the art of glass-painting was practised, a fact which Aubrey thus comments upon—

"Before the Reformation, I believe there was no county or great town in England but had glasse painters. Old — Harding of Blandford in Dorsetshire, where I went to schoole, was the only country glasse painter that ever I knew. Upon play daies I was wont to visit his shop and furnaces. He dyed about 1643, aged about 83 or more."

Mr. Hardy has made use of this historical detail, for William Willowes, the ill-fated first husband of Barbara of the house of Grebe, was, perhaps it will be remembered, sprung from a family of painters on glass, living at Shottsford, as Blandford is called in the novels. Otherwise it only appears in casual notices.

From Mr. Cawtree, of "The Woodlanders," we learn that "Shottsford is Shottsford still—you can't victual your carcass there unless you've got money; and you can't buy a cup of genuine there, whether or no." It was the place of residence of the clock-maker who so narrowly escaped the extreme penalty of the law in "The Three Strangers," and it was here that Henchard purchased the goldfinch which he vainly hoped might have paved the way for a reconciliation between himself and Elizabeth Jane.



HINTOCK HOUSE.

At no great distance from Blandford, though in an inaccessible spot, is Turnworth House, from which was drawn the Great Hintock House of "The Woodlanders," the residence of the fair and unfortunate Mrs. Charmond. Its situation fully corresponds to the description given of it in the novel.

"To describe it as standing in a hollow would not express the situation of the manor-house; it stood in a hole. But the hole was full of beauty. From the spot which Grace had reached, a stone could easily have been thrown over or into the birds'-nested chimneys of the mansion. Its walls were surmounted by a battlemented parapet; but the grey lead roofs were quite visible behind it, with their gutters, laps, rolls, and skylights, together with letterings and shoe-patterns cut by idlers thereon. The front of the house was an ordinary manorial presentation of Elizabethan windows, mullioned and hooded, worked in rich snuff-coloured freestone from local quarries. The ashlar of the walls, where not overgrown with ivy and other creepers, was coated with lichen of every shade, intensifying its luxuriance with its nearness to the ground till, below the plinth, it merged in moss. Above the house was a dense plantation, the roots of whose trees were above the level of the chimneys."

To the west of Turnworth, and just worth mentioning because they are alluded to in the novels, are Okeford Fitzpaine, the Oakbury (or Buckbury,

as it is in the earlier editions) Fitzpiers of "The Woodlanders," and Hazelbury Bryan, the Nuzzlebury mentioned in "Tess of the D'Urbervilles."

From Blandford there are two direct roads to Shaftesbury, both of which are well worth following, though that on the right is very rough and fearfully hilly; but for our purposes it will be more convenient to leave both these ways alone, and to take the more devious path which leads through Sturminster Newton and Marnhull. The former is the Stourcastle to which Tess was making her way when Prince the horse was killed by the slender shaft of the mail-cart. From Sturminster we can follow the road which poor Tess must have taken on this eventful morning, until we reach Marnhull, the Marlott of the story, which was her home. It is a long straggling village composed of houses of all ages, from ancient edifices with mullioned windows down to the blatant modern villa. Near the end of the village which is entered by the Sturminster road is a small public-house, which, but for its possessing a full licence, might very well stand for Rolliver's; and, quite at the other end, just beyond the church, is the undoubted representative of the "Pure Drop," in the shape of the Crown Inn. The name "Pure Drop" occurs as that of an inn at Wooton Glanville, not very far off, and perhaps Mr. Hardy may have obtained the suggestion there. At any rate, it was from the "Pure Drop" that old Durbeyfield obtained his carriage on the day when the former

MARLOTT—"THE PURE DROP."

greatness of his family was revealed to him by Parson Tringham, and it was in the field opposite that the dance was held at which Angel Clare saw Tess for the first time.

From Marnhull a straight road runs across the vale to the foot of the hill, on which stand, like fortifications, the houses of Shaftesbury. Like some other places, Shaston—it is the old name—looks far better from a distance than it does on a near inspection. It is impressive as seen from the road from Marnhull, but the best place to see it from is the summit of the zigzag on the top of the hill between Shaftesbury and Tollard Royal. From this point of view, and particularly on a summer evening when the sun is setting behind them, its buildings lose the meanness of appearance and poverty of detail which really characterize them, and the whole town might be "towered Camelot," or any other ancient city of romance. Such, indeed, it must have been in the days of its glory, now, alas! long gone by.

"Shaston," says Mr. Hardy, "the ancient British Palladour,

'From whose foundation first such strange reports arise'

(as Drayton sang it), was, and is, in itself the city of a dream. Vague imaginings of its castle, its three mints, its magnificent apsidal abbey, the chief glory of South Wessex, its twelve churches, its shrines, chantries, hospitals, its gabled freestone

mansions—all now ruthlessly swept away—throw the visitor, even against his will, into a pensive melancholy, which the stimulating atmosphere and limitless landscape around him can scarcely dispel. The spot was the burial-place of a king and a queen, of abbots and abbesses, saints and bishops, knights and squires. The bones of King Edward 'the Martyr,' carefully removed thither for holy preservation, brought Shaston a renown which made it the resort of pilgrims from every part of Europe, and enabled it to maintain a reputation extending far beyond English shores. To this fair creation of the great Middle Age the Dissolution was, as historians tell us, the death-knell. With the destruction of the enormous abbey the whole place collapsed in a general ruin ; the martyr's bones met with the fate of the sacred pile that held them, and not a stone is now left to tell where they lie.

"The natural picturesqueness and singularity of the town still remain ; but, strange to say, these qualities, which were noted by many writers in ages when scenic beauty is said to have been unappreciated, are passed over in this, and one of the queerest and quaintest spots in England stands virtually unvisited to-day. It has a unique position on the summit of an almost perpendicular scarp, rising on the north, south, and west sides of the borough out of the deep alluvial Vale of Blackmoor, the view from the Castle Green over three counties of verdant pasture—South, Mid, and Nether Wessex

—being as sudden a surprise to the unexpectant traveller's eyes as the medicinal air is to his lungs. Impossible by a railway, it can best be reached on foot, next best by light vehicles; and it is hardly accessible to these but by a sort of isthmus on the north-east, that connects it with the high chalk table-land on that side. Such is, and such was, the now world-forgotten Shaston or Palladour."

We approach the hill from the vale, and see how

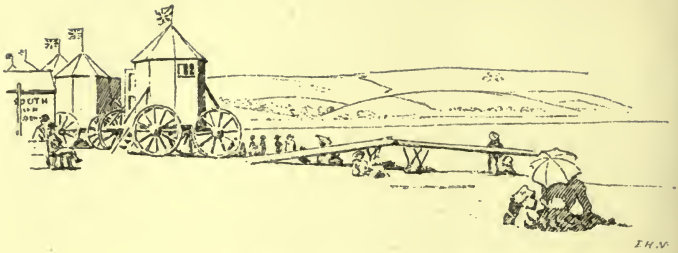
> "Paladore, on watch, do strain
> Her eyes to Blackmore's blue-hilled plain."

We climb up amongst the houses which hang around its outskirts, and we enter the town by scrambling up Cold Hill — the one picturesque feature in modern Shaftesbury — under the shadow of the buttresses which mark the position of the sole remaining fragment of the great abbey. This celebrated foundation owed its origin to no less a person than King Ælfred, and his daughter, Æthelgifu, was its first abbess. The body of Eadweard the Martyr was deposited here in 901, and the town thereafter became so celebrated on that account as to have actually changed its name to that of Eadweardstow. Money and lands it possessed in great quantity, so much so that Fuller records an old saying, that "if the Abbess of Shaftesbury might wed the Abbot of Glastonbury,

their heir would have more land than the King of England."

Beyond Cold Hill the town, save for the magnificent, the almost unrivalled distant views which it commands, is singularly destitute of interest. Its streets are called by names like Bimport, Cold Hill, and Commons, which remind one of the quaint Shrewsbury titles, and are not to be found in towns of modern growth; but the houses seem almost without exception to have been designed by the worst exponents of the meanest type of architecture, so that even the attractions of a really excellent inn, which the town possesses in the Grosvenor Arms, are not sufficient to induce most persons to linger there any great length of time. Shaftesbury is particularly associated with two of the Wessex novels. Tess, whose home was almost under its shadow, passed through it on her way to Trantridge, and her father was on his way from it when he met Parson Tringham. But the actual sites in it are more connected with "Jude the Obscure," for it was here that Phillotson had his school, and here that Sue lived with him and left him. The school overlooks the churchyard of the principal church, which stands behind the market-place and hotel. Close to it is a house with a very large porch, a more ancient-looking house than most in the town, though its air of antiquity has been somewhat dissipated since the story was written, by the substitution of a roof of spick-and-span red tiles for its

older and more picturesque covering. This is the house in which Phillotson and Sue lived, and from the windows of which she leaped. It occupies nearly the position which is assigned in an old map of Shaftesbury to the habitation of one Mr. Groves; hence the name which is given to it in the story of "Old Groves Place." No very great distance from Shaftesbury, in the valley, is Gillingham, once a royal manor, the Leddenton of the tale, where Phillotson's friend, to whom Mr. Hardy gives the real name of the place, was schoolmaster.



BUDMOUTH—THE BEACH.

CHAPTER XII

CASTERBRIDGE TO IVELL

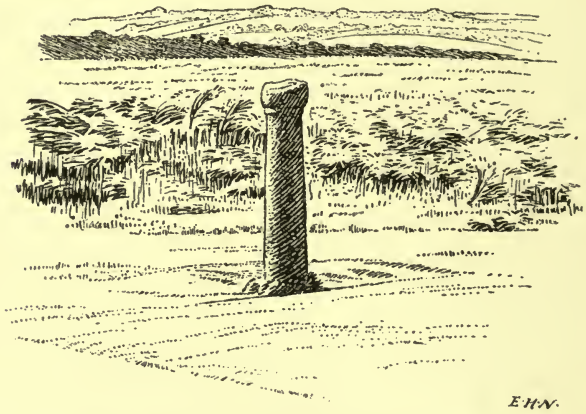
AGAIN we leave Dorchester by a road which we have already trodden, but this time it is by that which led us to Cerne and Sherborne. On this occasion we take the left-hand road at the fork beyond Wolfeton House, and continue our course until we come to another fork, a couple of miles further on. The left-hand road here leads to Maiden Newton, past Frampton, in whose church are to be seen the funeral memorials of the Sheridan family, and amongst them a window erected to the memory of the son of the Hon. Caroline Norton, "Diana of the Crossways." Maiden Newton is the Chalk Newton of the novels, where Tess breakfasted on her journey to Flintcombe Ash, and where the travellers in the tale of "Interlopers at the Knap" halted. The famous old hostelry, known as the "New Inn," at which

LITTLE HINTOCK.

both these occurrences took place, has unfortunately disappeared, having been pulled down a few years ago.

Instead of taking the left-hand road to Maiden Newton, that on the right may be followed. It is an ancient Roman road, which ran between Dorchester and Ilchester, in Somerset, the latter place now a small, mean, unimportant town which represents the once important imperial station of Ischalis. The modern name of this road is Long Ash Lane, and it was along this highway that Darton and Johns rode to the wooing of Sally Hall at Great Hintock. It is described in the story which centres round these figures as "a monotonous track without a village or hamlet for many miles, and with very seldom a turning. Unapprised wayfarers who are too old, or too young, or in other respects too weak for the distance to be traversed, but who, nevertheless, have to walk it, say, as they look wistfully ahead, 'Once at the top of that hill, and I must surely see the end of Long Ash Lane!' But they reach the hill-top, and Long Ash Lane stretches in front as mercilessly as before." No one who has had to walk or even to cycle along this road, especially in the dusk, will be inclined to contest the accuracy of this description. It was along this highway, also, that Betty Dornel, or Reynard, afterwards the First Countess of Wessex, fled with her faint-hearted lover, young Phelipson, from the neighbouring house of King's Hintock.

Keeping along this road until the cross road is reached which leads to Evershot Station and village, we come upon the track of Tess, on her way from Flintcombe Ash to Beaminster, to call upon the parents of Angel Clare. Here also we turn off and can follow in the footsteps of Tess as far as the village—called Evershead in the novel—where she



BATCOMBE DOWN—THE "CROSS-IN-HAND."

breakfasted on that Sunday morning. Or we can turn to the right up the hill and trace her path as far as the summit of Batcombe Down, on which is situated that strange pillar, Batcombe Cross-in-Hand. It is a long pull up to this point, but those who make the effort will certainly be rewarded by the view from the down, even if they are inclined to think that the pillar itself—an object not more than

four or five feet high—is scarcely of sufficient importance to demand so long an ascent. The pillar and the place are associated with the meeting of Tess on her way to Flintcombe Ash with Alec Stoke D'Urberville, on his road to preach at Abbot's Cernel.

"Of all spots on the bleached and desolate upland," says Mr. Hardy, "this was the most forlorn. It was so far removed from the charm which is sought in landscape by artists and view-lovers as to reach a new kind of beauty, a negative beauty of tragic tone. The place took its name from a stone pillar which stood there, a strange rude monolith, from a stratum unknown in any local quarry, on which was roughly carved a human hand. Differing accounts were given of its history and purpose. Some authorities stated that a devotional cross had once formed the complete erection thereon, of which the present relic was but the stump; others that the stone as it stood was entire, and that it had been fixed there to mark a boundary or place of meeting. Anyhow, whatever the origin of the relic, there was and is something sinister, or solemn, according to mood, in the scene amid which it stands; something tending to impress the most phlegmatic passer-by."

The solution of the mystery as to the origin of the pillar is, I believe, as far off as when Mr. Hardy wrote the novel; but one legend, which shows a fine blending of mediæval and Georgian ideas, may

be cited before the subject is disposed of. It is said that a priest taking the Viaticum to a sick person, and having to cross this down at night, dropped the pyx on his way. On discovering his loss, he at once returned in search of the sacred vessel. When he had reached the top of the down again, he was surprised to see a pillar of fire standing over the spot where the pyx lay, around which knelt a number of beasts, horned cattle, and sheep.

So far the obviously mediæval part of the tale; now for the Georgian addition. The tale as now told goes on to say that amongst these adoring animals was a black horse who knelt only on one knee, instead of on both as the others did. The priest asked him why he knelt as he did, when the horse replied that he would not kneel at all if he could help it. Asked who he was, he replied, "The devil." "Then why take the shape of a horse?" was the natural question. "So that men may steal me and get hung, and I get hold of them; I've got three or four already."

In the valley below the down is Batcombe Church, also associated with supernatural occurrences, for one of its pinnacles can in no way be induced to stop in its proper position, since it was kicked off by the hoof of "Conjurer Minterne's" horse, as he leapt it over the church. This worthy, who is mentioned in one of the Wessex novels, is said to have left directions that he was to be buried neither in nor out of the church, and a tomb is shown partly

projecting from the church wall, partly forming a portion of it, which is said to have been thus placed in order to fulfil the conjurer's injunctions.

Or, again, if it is decided to take the village of Evershot on trust—and, indeed, there is nothing of special interest to be seen in it, and a long hill to be negotiated before it is reached—we can take the first gate on the right, which leads into Melbury Sampford Park, and enter that spacious and lovely demesne. The avenue through the park winds between magnificent trees—we are on the edge of the region of "The Woodlanders"—with occasional glimpses of herds of deer, until we come upon a sheet of ornamental water, on the other side of which is the house of Melbury Sampford, the seat of the Fox-Strangways, Earls of Ilchester, and the King's Hintock Court of "The First Countess of Wessex." The house is a fine building, and should be seen from both the front and the back, perhaps the finest view of all being obtained from the rising ground on the opposite side of the water which Mr. New has chosen for his illustration.

The tale above alluded to is in part founded on fact, and the actual persons connected with it will easily be recognized in the following table :—

T. Horner (of Mells) m. 1713 Susannah Strangways, b. 1690, ob. 1728

Stephen Fox (afterwards E. of Ilchester), b. 1706, ob. 1776. = Elizabeth, b. 1723, m. 1736, ob. 1792.

Mells, therefore, is the real name of Falls Park, old Squire Dornell's own place in Somerset, the house to which he was wont to retire after a more

KING'S HINTOCK CHURCH.

than ordinarily violent contest with his wife, the heiress of King's Hintock.

Our childhood's friend, Little Jack Horner, was of this family ; the pie into which he put his thumb was that feast of fat things which was going when

the stately abbeys of the land were robbed of their property, and the plum which he pulled out is said to have been worth £10,000. The little church of Melbury Sampford, almost hidden by the house, contains many memorials of the family of Fox-Strangways, amongst which will be found that of Stephen Fox, in part quoted in the story, and here set down at full length below.

Near this stone is interred
STEPHEN EARL OF ILCHESTER,
who died at Melbury
Sept. 26, A.D. MDCCLXXVI, aged LXXII.
He was eighth son to Sir Stephen Fox, knight.
He married Elizabeth, only daughter of Thomas Horner,
of Mells, in the county of Somerset, esquire,
heiress general to the family of
Strangways of Melbury, in the county of Dorset,
by whom he had Henry Thomas, his eldest son,
now Earl of Ilchester
(who succeeds him in honours and estate),
and a numerous offspring.
As a small token of her great affection
to the best of husbands, fathers, friends,
his disconsolate widow inscribes this marble,
sacred to his memory.

Hush'd be the voice of bards who heroes praise,
And high o'er Glory's urn their pæans raise ;
And let an artless Muse a friend review,
Whose tranquil life one blameless tenor knew,
By nature formed to please, of happiest mien,
Just, friendly, chearful, affable, serene ;

Engaging manners, cultivated mind,
Adorn'd by letters and in courts refin'd,
His blooming honours long approv'd he bore,
And added lustre to that gem he wore ;
Grac'd with all powers to shine, he left parade,
And unambitious lov'd the sylvan shade ;
The choice by Heav'n applauded stood confess'd,
And all his days with all its blessings bless'd ;
Living belov'd, lamented in his end,
Unfading bliss his mortal change attend.

The " mile-long avenue " leads from the front of the house to the little village of Melbury Osmond, surely one of the most secluded spots to be found anywhere within the confines of this land—a place which figures under the name of King's Hintock in several of the novels. As has already been pointed out, it is in large measure the prototype of Little Hintock in " The Woodlanders." It consists of " gardens and orchards sunk in a concave, and, as it were, snipped out of the woodland. From this self-contained place rose in stealthy silence tall stems of smoke, which the eye of imagination could trace down to their root on quiet hearthstones, festooned overhead with hams and flitches. It was one of those sequestered spots outside the gates of the world where may usually be found more meditation than action, and more listlessness than meditation ; where reasoning proceeds on narrow premisses, and results in inferences wildly imaginative ; yet where, from time to time, dramas of a grandeur and unity truly Sophoclean are enacted in the real, by virtue of

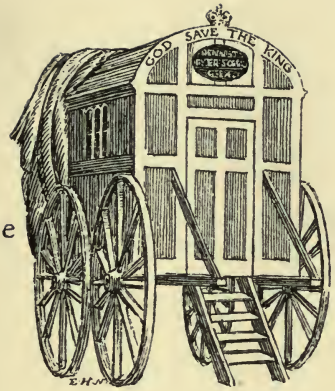
KING'S HINTOCK COURT.

the concentrated passions and closely knit interdependence of the lives therein." Whether Melbury Osmund has ever been the scene of the greater tragedies, so called, or not—it can scarce claim an immemorial immunity from those minor but harrowing tragedies of which nobody ever hears, but which loom so large in village life—it very closely agrees with the description which is given of Little Hintock in the above passage and in others throughout the novel. One feature, or, to be more accurate, two, which characterized it, and are described in the tale of "Interlopers at the Knap"—that is, the old farmhouse and the "large sycamore tree, whose bared roots formed a convenient staircase from the road below the front door of the dwelling"—are unfortunately no more, for one of them has been pulled down, and the other has disappeared, whether from natural or artificial causes I do not know, since the publication of the story. According to the description given in the tale, which is no doubt an accurate one, they were situated near the little brook which crosses what, for lack of a better term, one must call the main street of the village.

The main road is regained by a narrow lane, and, pursuing our way to Yeovil, we pass, at no great distance on the west of us, East Coker, the Narrobourne of "A Tragedy of Two Ambitions," where Joshua Halborough had a living, and where the drowning of his father took place. Finally we reach Yeovil, called Ivell, one of its old names, in the

novels, a place of considerable importance, but unconnected with any special episodes in the tales with which we are concerned. Cope, who married Milborne's daughter, Miss Frankland, in "For Conscience Sake," was curate there, and it is alluded to in the Poems and in the "Tragedy of Two Ambitions," but does not require any further time to be spent over it here.

GEORGE The Third's



BATHING MACHINE

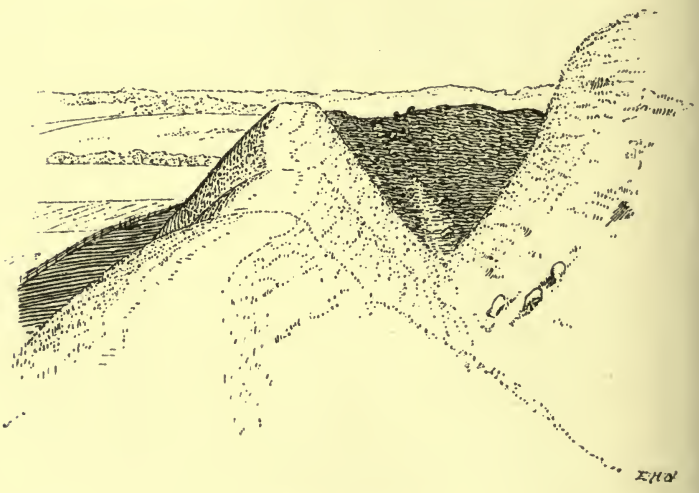
CHAPTER XIII

CASTERBRIDGE TO BUDMOUTH

THE traveller between Dorchester and Weymouth who chooses the road in preference to the rail, leaves the county town by the south street, passes the amphitheatre and the new cemetery, and finds himself traversing a fine avenue of trees, beyond which the straight road stretches forward to climb the Ridgeway with true Roman directness. Our traveller is, in fact, pursuing the road by which the Roman provincials used to reach their nearest port, which seems to have been situated where Radipole now is, and their seaside resort of Clavinium, which stood on the eminence of ground now known as Jordan Hill.

The avenue traversed, a narrow road on the right

leads to Winterborne Monkton and Maiden Castle, and is perhaps the best way for those to take who wish to explore that mighty earthwork. Some note of its history has already been given, and need not be repeated. It was in Maiden Castle that Henchard used to hide himself for the purpose of observing



MAIDON CASTLE.

the meetings of Elizabeth Jane and Farfrae, and it is in connection with it that Mr. Hardy wrote that fine tale "Ancient Earthworks at Casterbridge," which has never been republished since its first appearance in the *English Illustrated Magazine*, and from which the following descriptions are quoted.

BUDMOUTH AND THE ISLE OF SLINGERS.

"The profile of the whole stupendous ruin, as seen at a distance of a mile eastward, is cleanly cut as that of a marble inlay. It is varied with protuberances, which from hereabouts have the animal aspect of warts, wens, knuckles, and hips. It may, indeed, be likened to an enormous many-limbed organism of an antediluvian time—partaking of the cephalopod in shape—lying lifeless, and covered with a thin green cloth, which hides its substance, while revealing its general contour. This dull green mantle of herbage stretches down towards the levels, where the ploughs have essayed for centuries to creep up near and yet nearer to the base of the castle, but have always stopped short before reaching it. The furrows of these environing attempts show themselves distinctly, bending to the incline as they trench upon it; mounting in steeper curves, till the steepness absolutely baffles them, and their parallel threads show themselves like the striæ of waves pausing on the curl. The remarkable place of which these are some of the features is 'Mai-Dun'—'The Castle of the Great Hill,' said to be the Dunium of Ptolemy, the capital of the Durotriges, which eventually came into Roman occupation, and was finally deserted on their withdrawal from the island." The visitor, who scales the steep banks, and descends into the hollow ditches between them, should not leave the castle until he has examined the remarkable and maze-like entrances which are contrived at the end.

Of these we read in the same tale, "There, where all passage has seemed to be inviolably barred by an almost vertical façade, the ramparts are found to overlap each other like loosely clasped fingers, between which a zigzag path may be followed—a cunning construction that puzzles the uninformed eye. But its cunning, even when not obscured by dilapidation, is now wasted on the solitary forms of a few wild badgers, rabbits, and hares. Men must have often gone out by those gates in the morning to battle with the Roman legions under Vespasian; some to return no more, others to come back at evening, bringing with them the noise of their heroic deeds. But not a page, not a stone, has preserved their fame."

Regaining the main road, the traveller climbs the northern and less steep side of the Ridgeway, for the most part between high banks until he nears the summit. Here the old road, now disused, goes straight on over the crest of the hill to meet the new one, which makes a détour to the left and then turns upon itself, so as to mitigate the severity of what are after all quite sufficiently severe gradients for man or beast. When the top is reached, a splendid panorama lies before the wayfarer. To his right is Blackdown, crowned by the monument to Admiral Hardy, and in front of it is the wide expanse of West Bay—the dreaded Deadman's Bay of sailing ships. Near the centre is Portland, rearing its stony heights from the sea, and looking down on the

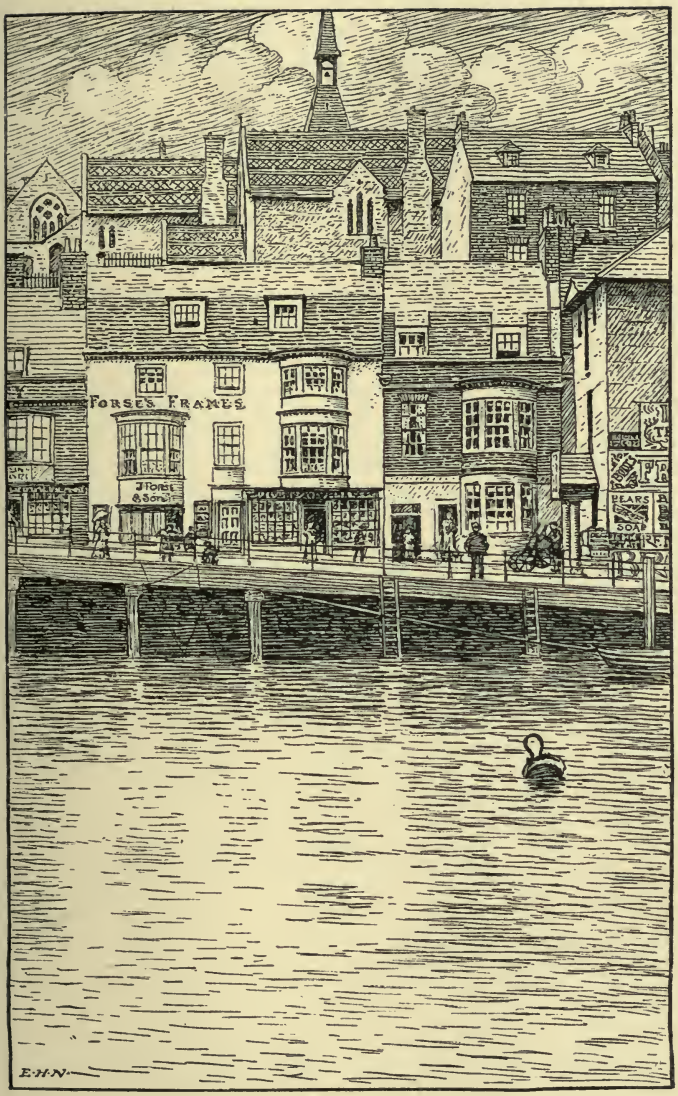
peaceful bay which washes the sandy beach of Weymouth. Further to the left is the sweep of coast terminated by St. Aldhelm's Head, whilst inland are the downs on which was pitched the soldier's camp told of in "The Trumpet-Major," the tumid height of Bincombe Barrows, and the ancient British village of Chalbury. Where the road bends upon itself, a little below the summit, is a steep lane on the left which leads to Bincombe, a long straggling village, the greater part of which is so deeply nestled into a hollow in the side of the downs as to be almost invisible until actually reached. This tiny and out-of-the-way spot must in earlier days have been of more importance than

BINCOMBE.

it is to-day. During the reign of Elizabeth, some unfortunate Catholics, priests and laymen, were put to death at Dorchester for the heinous offence of saying or hearing Mass, or for professing the then proscribed faith. After being duly quartered, their members were distributed to various places in the vicinity, and amongst those so favoured Bincombe was one. It would hardly now be selected for such a purpose were it considered advisable to resuscitate the methods by which our ancestors hoped to stamp out crime and freedom of opinion. Bincombe in later years was the scene of the tragic tale narrated in the story of "The Melancholy Hussar," a perfectly true account of an actual occurrence, the names, ages, and other facts being copied directly from the burial register of the parish. To return to the path from which we have strayed, at the foot of the Ridgeway the main road drops into an outlying part of Upwey, the larger portion of the village being further to the west. It contains a most picturesque mill, a photograph of which is one of the familiar decorations of the Great Western Railway carriages. Some people erroneously suppose this to have been the original of the mill at Overcombe in "The Trumpet-Major." There is also here a wishing-well, but the pretty village is rather too much overrun with trippers, brought in the brakes which run constantly in the summer time from Weymouth, to be attractive to those who love peace and quietness when they are in the country.

The road next passes through Broadwey, sometimes spelt Broadway, and owing the termination of its name to the little river Wey, or Way, as it was once called, from which Upwey and Weymouth also derive parts of their names. A little further on is the road to Radipole, near which Anne Garland met King George III. and the doctor who had been showing him the now disused spa, which still exists near the village. Immediately beyond this the outlying houses of Weymouth begin to be encountered, and finally, passing a modern church, we turn round a corner and are on the esplanade of Weymouth, associated with so many scenes in the Wessex novels. I have used the name Weymouth for the part of the world at which we have arrived, just as everybody else uses it, though strictly speaking we are in Melcombe Regis, and nearly a mile off Weymouth proper, which lies entirely on the other side of the river Wey. In former days the communication between the two was of a primitive nature, as Leland describes in his "Itinerary:" "The Tounlet of Waymouth lyith strait agayn Milton on the other side of the haven, and at this place the Trajectus is by a bote and a rope, bent over the haven, so that in the ferry-bote they use no ores." Situated so near to one another and sharing the dignity and benefits of a harbour, it is not difficult to understand how jealousies and rivalries sprang up between the two places. All such difficulties disappeared when they were joined to

one another structurally by means of a bridge, and organically, under a common corporation. Camden may be quoted on these points: "These [Melcombe and Weymouth] stood both some time proudlie upon their owne several priviledges, and were in emulation one of the other, but now tho (God turne it to the good of both !) many, they are, by authoritie of Parliament, incorporated into one bodie, conjoyned by late by a bridge, and growne very much greater and goodlier in buildings and by sea adventures than heretofore." "By sea adventures"—for, like other minor ports in Wessex, Weymouth, in the days of vessels of small tonnage, was a harbour of some importance, and actually fitted out six ships against the Spanish Armada. The largest of these was the *Golden Ryal* or *Lion* of 120 tons, and the smallest, the *Heath-hen*, of 60 tons, both smaller vessels than some of the yachts now casting anchor here at regatta-time. Two of the ships of the Armada, which had been captured, were brought into Weymouth harbour to be unladen, and the inventory of their contents is still extant, signed by George Trenchard and Francis Hawley, whose duty it was to supervise this business. The later prosperity of Weymouth, however, rests upon the reputation which it possesses as a watering-place, and to George III. it owes its gratitude for having made it a fashionable resort. The favour was repaid by the erection at his jubilee of perhaps one of the most inartistic statues ever produced, even at



BUDMOUTH—THE OLD TOWN.

such times of inartistic licence. George and his family made ten visits to Weymouth, to the great delight of the natives of the place and country, and their joy was voiced by the Rev. Mr. Tasker, a local clergyman and poet of the minor order, in an ode, the first and last verses of which may be quoted here—

"The Nation's loyal vows shall not be vain!
Goddess of health, Hygeia! from the main
Wafted by healing breezes rise;
Aid the mild influence of the skies:
Expand thy zephyr's gentle gales
O'er Dorset hills, and Melcomb's vales:
Pure air from strength'ning Ocean bring:
Fragrant and fresh for Britain's King:
Pure air instinct with native power,
Unsoil'd by noxious herb or flower.

"While nobler Bards may strike the lyre,
Impregnate with extatic fire,
Permit thy humble votary to bring
His mite of song to thee, O King!
E'en as the gentle rivulet of Way
Rolls his small current to the mighty sea."

Of one of these visits we read: "July 30, 1797, they left Windsor, and, on account of the excessive heat of the season, travelled all night, and reached Weymouth next day, whence they returned to Windsor, September 18." This must have been the occasion on which the Loveday family and their neighbours spent the night upon the down for the doubtful pleasure of seeing a royal family, sunk in

heavy sleep, whirled rapidly past them in the heavy coaches of the period. At Weymouth the monarch used to take his dip from a bathing-machine, which Mr. New has reproduced from a contemporary engraving, whilst from an adjacent machine a sorely

GLOUCESTER LODGE.

crowded band did its best to pour forth the strains of "God save the King." The king inhabited a house, which is now the Gloucester Hotel, on the esplanade, and used often to honour with his presence the balls and assemblies which were held at the old Royal

Hotel, a hostelry formerly occupying the site of the modern edifice of the same name.

The customs at such entertainments are delightfully suggested to us by the rules drawn up for their conduct, a few years after George had made his last visit to the town.

"RULES OF WEYMOUTH PUBLIC ROOMS AS PROMULGATED BY T. RODBER M.C. 1813.

I. That gentlemen are not to appear in the rooms either on Tuesday or Friday evenings in boots, nor ladies in riding habits.

II. That the ball shall begin as soon as possible after 7 o'clock, and finish precisely at 11.

III. That ladies and gentlemen who dance down a country dance shall not quit their places till a dance is finished, unless they do not mean to dance any more that night.

IV. That no lady or gentleman can be permitted to dance in coloured gloves.

V. That after a lady has called a dance and danced it down, her place in the next dance is at the bottom.

VI. That no tea-table be carried into the card-room.

VII. That gentlemen will be pleased to leave their swords at the door.

VIII. That no dogs be admitted."

Budmouth, as it is called in the Wessex novels, figures more frequently in those tales than any other place with the exception of Casterbridge, but it is especially connected with the novel of "The Trumpet-Major." Here we have the description of the life of the king at Gloucester Lodge, in front

of which "a picket of a thousand men mounted guard every day;" of his bathing, and of the many other scenes incident upon a royal visit. In fact, the whole novel is nearly as much concerned with Weymouth as with Sutton Poyntz, near by, where the miller and his family lived. It is also the spot to which Owen Graye and Cytherea came after the death of their father; and it was in the beautiful bay that Edward Springrove took the girl for a row and confided to her his love. Another couple, in another story, also went for a row in this bay, but with a more tragic ending; for here it was that Stephen Hardcome went out with his cousin's wife for that excursion which terminated by their dead bodies being washed ashore at Lulworth Cove, as narrated in the tales of "The Crusted Characters." In "The Return of the Native," Venn, the reddle-man, tried to persuade Eustacia to give up Wildeve, by painting to her the delights of the seaside place, "Budmouth is a wonderful place—wonderful—a great salt sheening sea bending into the land like a bow—thousands of gentlepeople walking up and down—bands of music playing—officers by sea and officers by land walking among the rest—out of every ten folk you meet nine of 'em in love." Here Dick Dewey met Fancy Day, and drove her home on that momentous afternoon on which he extracted from her an admission of her love. Here also the oft-disappointed seeker after the ideal maiden met with two incarnations of the Well-beloved.

It is a delightful spot, though of late years its charms cannot be said to have been enhanced by the streams of sailors and soldiers who pour into it from the neighbouring Portland Roads. But with all this it is an excellent place for headquarters when exploring the country of the Wessex novels.

BUDMOUTH—THE HARBOUR.

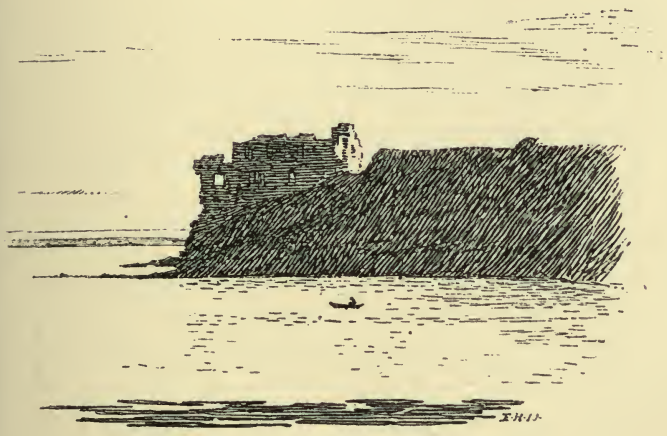
CHAPTER XIV

THE ISLE OF SLINGERS, AND OTHER PLACES BETWEEN BUDMOUTH AND PORT BREDY

TO get to Portland by the coast-road we must cross the bridge which separates Melcombe Regis from Weymouth, and, as we do so, we can look across the harbour to the opposite side, where may still be seen "the houses of the merchants, some ancient structures of solid stone, others green-shuttered with heavy wooden bow-windows which appeared as if about to drop into the harbour by their own weight." Then we cross the eminence of the Nothe, with its terminal fort, an eminence formerly known as the Look-out, from which anxious eyes must often have gazed for the coming of the ships of the dreaded Armada, or

THE ISLE OF SLINGERS.

those not less dreaded flat-bottomed boats which were to bring the Napoleonic legions to the invasion of the British shore. From this a footpath leads along the margin of the bay to Sandsfoot Castle, King Henry VIII.'s Castle of "The Well-Beloved." "Ther rynneth up by the right hond of the haven," says Leland, "a great arme of the se, and scant a



SANDSFOOT CASTLE.

mile above the haven mouth, on the shore of this arme, ys a right goodlie warlyke Castel made, havyng one open barbicane (Sandesfort)." This castle, erected by Henry VIII., is by no means an impressive piece of military architecture when seen near at hand, but is of interest to us because it was here that Avice the first failed to meet Jocelyn Pierston,

and here also that the same impressionable gentleman made known his plans with regard to Avice the third to her mother, Avice the second. Still further on the "great arme of the se," the Fleet, which stretches for miles between the Chesil Beach and the mainland, is crossed at Small Mouth by a bridge, which has been erected since the times of "The Trumpet-Major." We now enter upon the road which runs along the east side of the Chesil Bank, that marvellous barrier of pebbles cast up by "rages of the se," the edges of which are splendid at the proper season with the sea-holly and the horned poppy.

"The long monotonous bank," over which can be heard "the canine scrunching of pebbles by the sea without," is certainly one of the most remarkable objects to be seen anywhere along our shores. It joins the land at Abbotsbury, but is really prolonged, as the beach, as far as Bridport Quay, and consists of pebbles so carefully sifted by the sea, the largest being at Portland and the smallest at the other end, that it is said that smugglers could tell, with very fair accuracy, on which part of the bank they might have landed at night, by merely handling the stones on which their boat had chanced to ground. Leland's account of this bank is quaint, if unscientific. "The nature of this Bank of *Chisil* is such that as often as the wind blowith strene at South Est so often the se betith it and losith the Bank and breakith through it. So

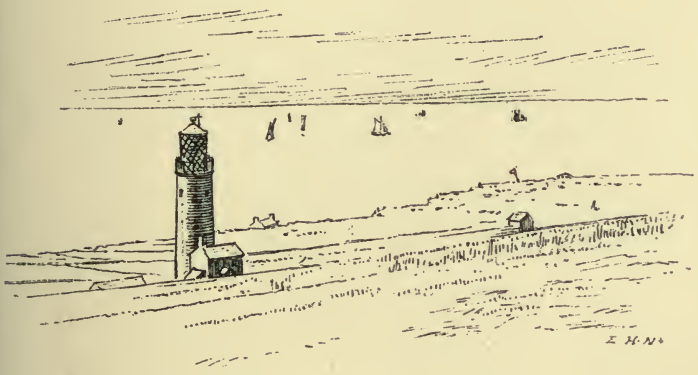
that if this Winde might most continually blow there this Bank should sone be beten away and the se fully enter and devide *Portland*, making it an Isle, as surely in tymes past it hath beene as far as I can by any conjecture gather. But as much as the South Est wind dooth bete and breke of this Chisille Bank, so much doth the North West wynd again socor, strengith and augmentith it." The Chesil Beach is washed by that wicked piece of sea, devoid of safe harbours, the West Bay, which has been the death of so many brave men and so many tall ships in bygone days. The tombs of many sailors who have perished in its waters are to be seen in Wyke churchyard on the top of the hill, and one part of the bay, a favourite fishing-place for whiting, is still called the Abbey grounds, because there lie the timbers of the *Abergavenny*, which went down with all hands in the winter of 1805. In Wyke churchyard, besides the memorial to those who perished in this ship, is a monument to seventeen officers and two hundred and fifteen soldiers bound for the West Indies, who met their death in the storm of the 18th November, 1795. After a storm, even in these days, the ground swell will sometimes wash up ancient rings, silver ingots, and other jetsam from the ships which have found their last port in the depths of the Deadman's Bay.

On the left side as we walk along the road is the mighty naval haven of Portland Roads, with its breakwaters, where lay the *Black Arrow* on which

Bob Loveday was so nearly impressed, and where now generally lie some of those triumphs of modern naval engineering which have replaced the wooden walls of Nelson's day.

At the end of this road we enter "the singular peninsula once an island, and still called such, that stretches out like the head of a bird into the English Channel," and may commence to ascend the steep street of Fortune's Well, the Street of Wells of "The Well-Beloved," where are to be seen "houses upon houses, one man's doorstep rising behind his neighbour's chimney, the gardens hung up by one edge to the sky, the vegetables growing upon apparently almost vertical planes." This island, the "solid and single block of limestone four miles long," is the ancient Vindilia, the inhabitants of which are credited with having been in past times the most expert of slingers. Certainly, if they were not so, it was not because nature had been ungenerous in providing gratuitously a superabundant supply of ammunition. The inhabitants were, perhaps one may say are, a peculiar race, with their own modes of life and customs, especially that particular island custom of which a full account will be found in the County History, and with great contempt for non-islanders, whom they call kimberlins or foreigners. The curious in that direction can visit the Convict Prison, that nook which "is the retreat, at their country's expense, of geniuses from a distance;" but we shall do better to push on over

the high ground towards Easton and Pennsylvania Castle. This castle, which is merely a modern house, stands within the only group of trees on the island, and was the place of residence of Jocelyn Pierston in the story. Near by are Avice's cottage, easily to be recognized; Bow and Arrow or Rufus's Castle, where the third Avice met Leverre, on the night of her elopement; and the Hope Churchyard



PORTLAND BEAL.

where Pierston wooed her grandmother. From this spot we can make our way to the extreme end of the island, and recall, as we walk, an early scene in Victor Hugo's " L'homme qui rit."

The houses become fewer, and we pass by fields of blue lucerne to the Bill or Beal, as it was always named, and still is called by the natives. It seems probable that this is a nearer approach to the old

name, by which may have been indicated one of the places where, in pagan times, the Bale fire was lit.

At last the "wild, herbless, weather-worn promontory" is reached from which Anne Garland watched the departure of the *Victory*, till "her courses were absorbed into the main, then her topsails went, and then her top-gallants. She was now no more than a dead fly's wing on a sheet of spider's web ; and even this fragment diminished. Anne could hardly bear to see the end, and yet she resolved not to flinch. The admiral's flag sank behind the watery line, and in a minute the very truck of the last topmast stole away. The *Victory* was gone.

"Anne's lip quivered as she murmured, without removing her wet eyes from the vacant and solemn horizon, 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters——'

"'These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep,' was returned by a man's voice from behind her.

"Looking round quickly, she saw a soldier standing there ; and the grave eyes of John Loveday bent on her.

"'' 'Tis what I was thinking,' she said, trying to be composed.

"'You were saying it,' he answered gently."

As we, too, look out upon the sea, we behold the torn waters of the Race, and perhaps also the Shambles lightship rolling and tumbling about as it

guards that dangerous sandbank—the lightship on which Avice the third and Leverre found shelter after they had fled from Portland. For we are now standing on the spot which Henry Knight pointed

PO'SHAM.

out to Elfrida Swancourt as they made their Channel passage to Plymouth.

"'Due south of Portland Bill. Those are the lights abeam of us. A terrible spot, that, on a stormy night. And do you see that very small light that dips and rises to the right? That's a lightship

on the dangerous shoal called the Shambles, where many a good vessel has gone to pieces. Between it and ourselves is the Race—a place where antagonistic currents meet and form whirlpools; a spot which is rough in the smoothest weather, and terrific in a wind. That dark, dreary horizon we

CAPTAIN HARDY'S HOUSE.

just discern to the left is the West Bay, terminated landwards by the Chesil Bank.'"

After mentally watching the *Victory* out of sight, we may turn our attention to Portisham, or Po'sham, as it is called in the story and by the country folk, the home of her commander. We can walk to it from Portland or Weymouth, but it is better to take train

there from the latter place. We reach the little village sunk in a hollow beneath the sheltering downs, and leave the railway station by the road leading to the church. At the point at which this crosses the road to Abbotsbury, and immediately on the left side of the latter, there will be seen a little low-built house almost covered with creepers. A charming garden faces it on the opposite side of the way. This was the home of Thomas Masterman Hardy, the captain of the *Victory*, in whose arms Nelson died, and it was here that he was visited by Bob Loveday. The house is still in the possession of a descendant of the Hardy family on the female side, who preserves his gallant ancestor's watch, uniform, and other relics. In the little garden opposite is a sun-dial, which bears the inscription—

JOSEPH HARDY, Esqr.
Kingston Russell. Lat. 50° 45′.
1767.
FUGIO FUGE.

This Hardy must have been the admiral's father, and the date is just two years before the child, afterwards to be so celebrated, was born at Portisham.

From Portisham one can walk or cycle to Abbotsbury. Here are the fine remains of what was once, perhaps, the most spacious tithe-barn in England, a swannery, a chapel of St. Catherine, and

other things well worth seeing. Thence we can make our way to Bridport, the next place on our list. Pedestrian or cyclist must be prepared for a rather bad road, and for the latter there is one of the neatest death-traps imaginable in the shape of a steep hill, with a gate across the track, skilfully concealed round a corner near its foot. There is this to be said, that those who dare the road will be well rewarded by the views with which it will repay them. If this road be taken to Bridport, that detached portion of the town which is known as Bridport Quay or West Bay will first be reached. It is a tiny watering-place known to and appreciated by a few elect persons, and consists of one row of lodging-houses—whose architect was a genius—two or three small inns, and a few cottages. The little beach, or rather the beaches on either side of the quaint harbour, may be looked upon as the last trace of the Chesil Bank, and consist, not of sand, as one would imagine from looking at them from a short distance, but of the tiniest little pebbles. Here we have them at their minimum, as compared with other parts of the bank. The beaches are enclosed by two great cliffs, and who that has seen them from the Bridport road in the evening, beneath the rays of the setting sun, can fail to recognize the splendid truthfulness of Mr. Hardy's description in the story of "Fellow-Townsmen" ?—

"The harbour-road soon began to justify its name. A gap appeared in the rampart of hills which

PORT BREDY.

shut out the sea, and on the left of the opening rose a vertical cliff, coloured a burning orange by the sunlight, the companion cliff on the right side being livid in shade. Between these cliffs, like the Libyan bay which sheltered the shipwrecked Trojans, was a little haven, seemingly a beginning made by Nature herself of a perfect harbour, which appealed to the passer-by as only requiring a little human industry to finish it and make it famous, the ground on each side as far back as the daisied slopes that bounded the interior valley being a mere layer of blown sand. But the Port-Bredy burgesses a mile inland had, in the course of ten centuries, responded many times to that mute appeal, with the result that the tides had invariably choked up their works with sand and shingle as soon as completed. There were but few houses here : a rough pier, a few boats, some stores, an inn, a residence or two, a ketch unloading in the harbour, were the chief features of the settlement."

A mile and a half up the road inland is Bridport itself, a little market-town, with a mayor and corporation, and an old-standing manufacture of ropes. As long ago as the days of Leland, to say that a man had been stabbed with a Bridport dagger, was tantamount to saying that he had been hung by the neck until he was dead. The humour of this remark was, however, lost upon the worthy topographer, who committed himself to the statement, based upon this saying, that "At Bridport be made good daggers." It will be remembered that it was

by the rope industry that the forbears of Barnet, one of the two heroes of the tale mentioned above, had made their money. Bridport is also the centre of a cheese-making district, and the market-place is full of the Dorset "blue-vinny" or blue-veined cheese at the proper time of the year. It was at one of the

EMMINSTER.

neighbouring dairies that Tess came to work after Clare had left her and before she went to Flintcombe Ash.

About eight miles north of Bridport, hidden within a grand amphitheatre of hills, is the out-of-

the-way town of Beaminster, which the natives speak of as Bemister, the Emminster of "Tess o' the D'Urbervilles." It is "the hill-surrounded town," with its "Tudor church tower of red stone," of which Angel Clare's father was vicar, and to which Tess made her painful journey from Flintcombe Ash over Batcombe Down and through Benville Lane.

"Sweet Be'mi'ster, that bist a-bound
By green and woody hills all round,
Wi' hedges, reachèn up between
A thousan' vields o' zummer green,
Where elem's lofty heads do drow
Their sheädes vor häy-meakers below,
An' wild hedge-flow'rs do charm the souls
O' maidens in their evenèn strolls."

(Barnes.)

It is a charming spot, and well worth a visit, in spite of, perhaps partly on account of, its extreme inaccessibility.

OVERCOMBE—THE ANCIENT BRIDGE.

CHAPTER XV

BUDMOUTH TO LULSTEAD

IN this excursion the road leads east instead of west, and crossing that gentle slope which is called Greenhill, takes us past the malodorous marsh called Lodmore and under Jordan Hill, once the site of a Roman watering-place, where many relics of imperial times have been turned up by the plough and spade. A couple of miles further, the

OVERCOMBE.

road crosses a stream, and looking to our left there is to be seen a little one-arched bridge of exceedingly rude construction. This may date back to Roman times, though some authorities have been inclined to assign it to the Norman period. It may possibly have been the bridge without a parapet under which Anne Garland and Matilda Johnson hid Bob Loveday from the press-gang, for the houses near which it stands form part of the village of Sutton Poyntz, the Overcombe of "The Trumpet-Major." The village may be approached by the footpath near this bridge, or by taking the next turn on the left beyond it. Whichever way is chosen, the visitor will eventually reach a flour-mill driven by the waters of the little stream running through the valley in which the village nestles. The Hardyite, who is really familiar with the novels, will at first experience a sense of disappointment, for in no way can what he sees be made to fit in with the details given in the story. His mind will, however, be relieved when he learns that the mill of the story has been pulled down, that which now occupies its site being a modern erection. Modern, too, is the tall chimney of the waterworks, which ensure to Weymouth a constant and excellent supply of that fluid, to the serious detriment of the scene, and the great attenuation of the stream which drives the mill. If one passes the mill and halts upon the tiny bridge which spans the stream a little higher up the road, and then endeavours to eliminate from the prospect the

aforesaid chimney and a new and obtrusive inn, too often noisy with hordes of trippers from the neighbouring watering-place, a good idea can be obtained of what the village and the mill-pond looked like on the day when John Loveday and the troopers descended from the hill to water their horses in the pool.

This is the prospect which Anne surveyed from her chamber window. "Immediately before her was the large, smooth mill-pond, over-full, and intruding into the hedge and into the road. The water, with its flowing leaves and spots of froth, was stealing away, like Time, under the dark arch, to tumble over the great slimy wheel within. On the other side of the mill-pond was an open place called the Cross, because it was three-quarters of one, two lanes and a cattle-drive meeting there. It was the general rendezvous and arena of the surrounding village. Behind this a steep slope rose high into the sky, merging in a wide and open down, now littered with sheep newly shorn. The upland by its height completely sheltered the mill and village from north winds, making summers of springs, reducing winters to autumn temperatures, and permitting myrtles to flourish in the open air." John Loveday pointed out to Anne one day that the soldiers were "cutting out a huge picture of the king on horseback in the earth of the hill. The king's head is to be as big as our mill-pond, and his body as big as this garden; he and the horse will cover more than an acre."

Those who wish to climb up and closely examine this work of art had better do so from here. Those who are content with a distant view of it can obtain it from the long hill which has to be climbed after the main road has been regained. This hill climbed

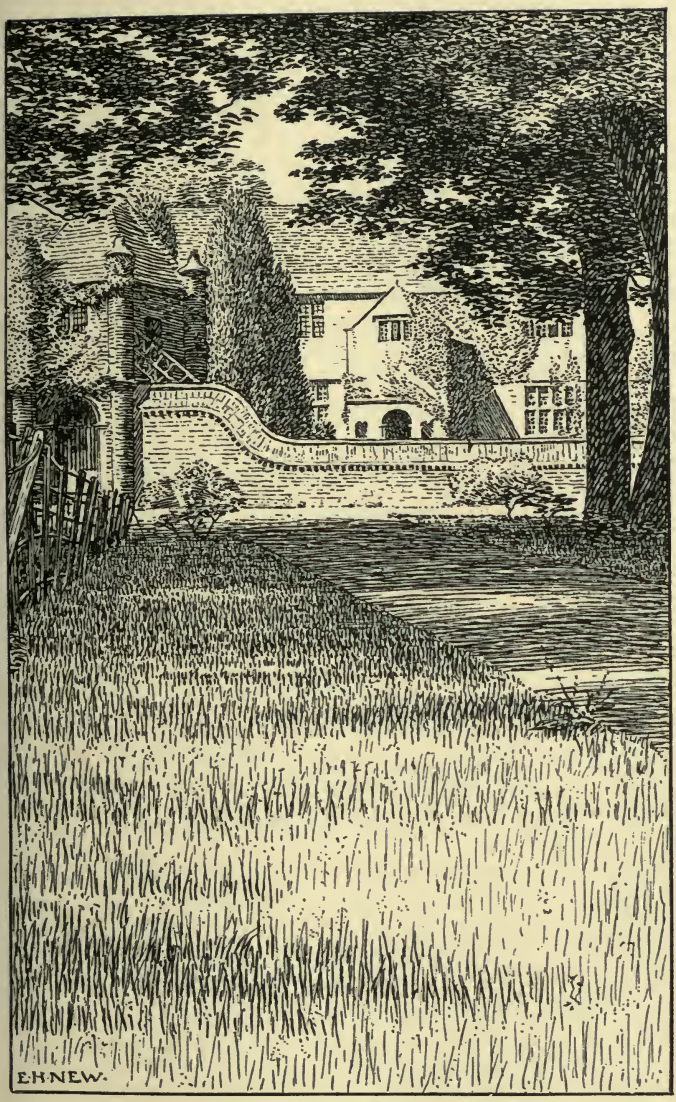
FIGURE OF GEORGE III.

and the descent of its opposite side accomplished, the village of Osmington, where there is nothing to detain us, is reached.

The next village is Poxwell, whose name is a corruption of Puck's well. It is the Oxwell

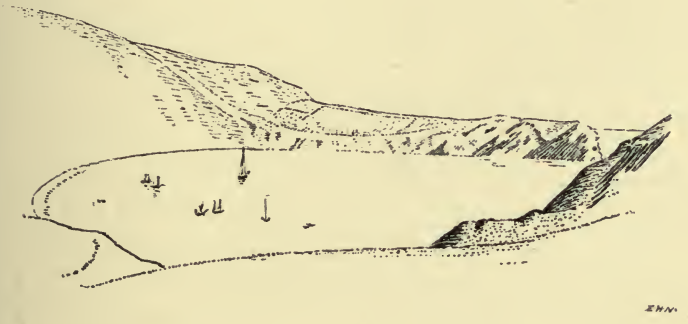
of "The Trumpet-Major," and contains the fine Jacobean manor-house of the Hennings at which old Derriman lived—though, for the purposes of his story, Mr. Hardy has placed it considerably nearer to Overcombe than it really is. Like Waterston, it was once the residence of one of the smaller families of the county, and, like it, has descended in the social scale to the status of a farmhouse. It closely corresponds with the description given in the story, though it is in a better state of repair than in the days of the penurious Derriman. The eye will at once be caught by the arched gateway which screens the main front, and the porter's lodge above it, reached by a spiral staircase. The visitor should, after having examined the front of this fine old house, walk round to the east side, with its row of gable-ends, and investigate, if he is allowed, the yard at the back, after which he will come to the conclusion that few modern houses can compete in beauty with this ancient residence.

A mile or so beyond Poxwell the road meets that from Dorchester at Warmwell Cross, and here we are on ground which we have already traversed. We pass the road which turns down to Owermoigne, and take the turn by the Red Lion leading to Lulworth, through Winfrith Newburgh. Beyond West Lulworth is Lulworth Cove, the goal of our journey. This is the "small basin of sea enclosed by the cliffs" in which Troy bathed after his night in Puddletown church porch, and at its mouth can



OXWELL MANOR.

be seen "the two projecting spurs of rock which formed the pillars of Hercules to this miniature Mediterranean." It is the Lulstead of the novels, where the dead bodies of Stephen Hardcome and his cousin's wife were washed up, and where Cytherea Graye met Edward Springrove for the first time. It is also one of the places where Mrs. Lizzie Newberry's associates were in the habit of



LULSTEAD COVE.

running their cargoes of smuggled spirit, and seems, indeed, by nature to have been intended for clandestine operations of one sort or another. During the time when the Catholic religion was proscribed in this country, and those who professed it were subjected to the rigours of a harsh penal code, the introduction of priests into England was one of the things most strictly forbidden. Yet many a seminary

priest did find his way into the country, and a large number of these were landed, under cover of night, in this secluded basin, and hurried off to the neighbouring Catholic house of Lulworth Castle, the seat of the Weld family. Finally, this is "the three-quarter round Cove, screened from every mortal eye," where old Solomon Selby, when a young man, saw Bonaparte exploring the land in search of a suitable place for the landing of his fleet of flat-bottomed boats, as narrated in the "Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four." It is difficult, until one examines the broadsheets and other ephemeral literature of the day, to realize how great was the terror of a French descent upon these shores. Some idea we gain of it from the scenes in "The Trumpet-Major;" but, then, Mr. Hardy has had the advantage of hearing accounts of that time from the lips of actual eye-witnesses, who are now laid to rest. In the novel just mentioned there is a transcription of a Proclamation to the people of England, telling them how they should prepare for the expected invasion. An original copy of this Proclamation may be seen in the Museum at Salisbury, and by it hangs another document of the same kind, which is less well known. It throws so much light upon the state of feeling at the period, that it will not be loss of space to quote it here *in extenso*.

"Fellow-Citizens,—Bonaparte threatens to invade us. He promises to enrich his soldiers with

our property: To glut their lust with our Wives and Daughters: To incite his Hell-hounds to execute his vengeance he has *sworn* to permit everything. Shall we merit, by our cowardice, the titles of Sordid Shopkeepers, Cowardly Scum and Dastardly Wretches, which in every proclamation he gives us: No; we will loudly give him the *lie:* let us make ourselves ready to shut our Shops and march to give him the reception his malicious calumnies deserve: let every brave young fellow instantly join the *Army* or *Navy;* and those among us, who, from being married or so occupied in business, cannot, let us join some Volunteer Corps, where we may learn the use of arms and yet attend our business; let us encourage recruiting in our neighbourhood, and loudly silence the tongues of those whose Ignorance or Defection (if any such there be) lead them to doubt of the attempt to invade, or inveigh against the measures taken to resist it.—By doing this, and feeling confidence in ourselves, we shall probably prevent the attempt, or, if favoured by a dark night, the enemy should reach our shores,—our Unanimity and Strength will paralize his efforts and render him an easy prey to our brave *Army.* Let *us* in our families and neighbourhood, thus contribute to so desirable an event, and the *blood-stained banners of the vaunted Conquerors of Europe will soon be hung up in our Churches, the humble trophies of our brave Army:* —an Army ever victorious when not doubled in numbers; and the only Army who can stand

the charge of Bayonets.—What *Army* ever stood THEIRS ! ! !—*let the welfare of our country animate all—and* '*come the world in arms against us, we'll shock 'em.*'

A Shopkeeper.

Thee Haughty Tyrants ne'er shall tame,
All their attempts to pull thee down
Shall but arouse thy gen'rous flame
To light their woe and thy renown.—R.B.

Rule Brittannia.

Printed for J. Ginger, 169, Piccadilly.
Price Sixpence per Dozen for Distribution.
W. Marchant, Printer, 3, Greville St., Holborn."

One more instance of the careful study of the literature of the time which Mr. Hardy has made, and of the vivid picture which he has thus been enabled to throw upon the canvas of his tale, may be found in the data on which are based Corporal Tullidge's instructions for firing his beacon.

"'Did you get your signal to fire it from the east?' said the miller hastily.

"'No; from Abbotsea Beach.'

"'But you are not to go by a coast signal!'

"'Chok' it all, wasn't the Lord-Lieutenant's direction, whenever you see Rainbarrow's Beacon burn to the nor'-east'ard, or Haggardon to the

nor'-west'ard, or the actual presence of the enemy on the shore ?' "

Now, in Bankes' "Story of Corfe Castle," will be found a copy of a letter sent by the Earl of Dorchester, the Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Dorset, to Henry Bankes, Esq., then member of Parliament for Corfe Castle, which, with a substitution of names, contains very much the same directions which Tullidge recited.

Private.

"Milton Abbey, Blandford,
"October 12, 1803.

"My dear Bankes,—The spring-tides take place next Saturday, and the information to Government is so precise that the Isle of Wight is the enemy's object, that it is not improbable they may avail themselves of this ensuing spring-tide ; if they do not, their attempt must be postponed another month. Under these circumstances I would not fail of giving you this notice in confidence, that you will keep it to yourself, and only so far prepare Mrs. Bankes and your family as to be able to remove them upon the first intelligence of the enemy's being off the coast. I have to beg of you that you will give directions for an assemblage of fagots, furze, and other fuel, also of straw to be stacked and piled on the summit of Badbury Rings, so as the whole may take fire instantly, and the fire be maintained for two hours. The general direction, if you will take

the trouble of ordering the execution, is that this beacon may be fired whenever the beacon off St. Catherine's (Christ Church) is fired to the eastward, or whenever the beacons on Lytchet Heath or Woodbury Hill are fired to the westward, but not from the demonstration of any coast signal.

"I am, my dear Bankes,

"Yours most sincerely,

"DORCHESTER."

One word more to the visitor to Lulworth. It is a good plan to time one's visit to that spot so as to catch the steamer from Weymouth, which visits that place on certain days during the summer, on its return trip. Thus the fatigue of the journey will be avoided, and an opportunity will be afforded for seeing the coast scenery between the two places. The rocks near Lulworth, Durdle Door, that strange natural archway, and Ringstead Cove, where the smuggling parishioners of the Distracted Preacher ran their tubs, will all be seen on this short voyage.

KNOLLSEA.

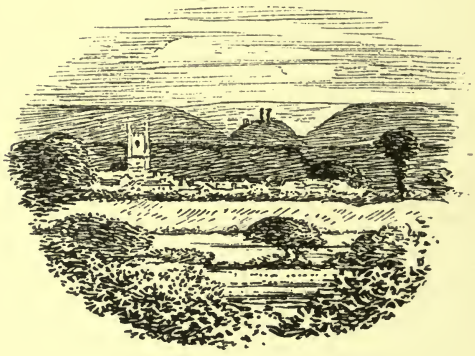
CHAPTER XVI

SOME PLACES NEAR ANGLEBURY

FROM Wareham it is an easy journey to Corfe and Swanage, by the little railway which connects the three places, and no one would think of being in the district without at least visiting the ruin of the famous castle. Its designation in the novels, Corvesgate Castle, is, like many of Mr. Hardy's other place-names, the title by which it was once known ; and when we remind ourselves that this means the castle in the carven gate (of the downs), we see its extreme suitability. For on either side of the steep natural mound, on which the ruins stand, is a line of downs separated from the castle and its base by deep ravines occupied by little rivers.

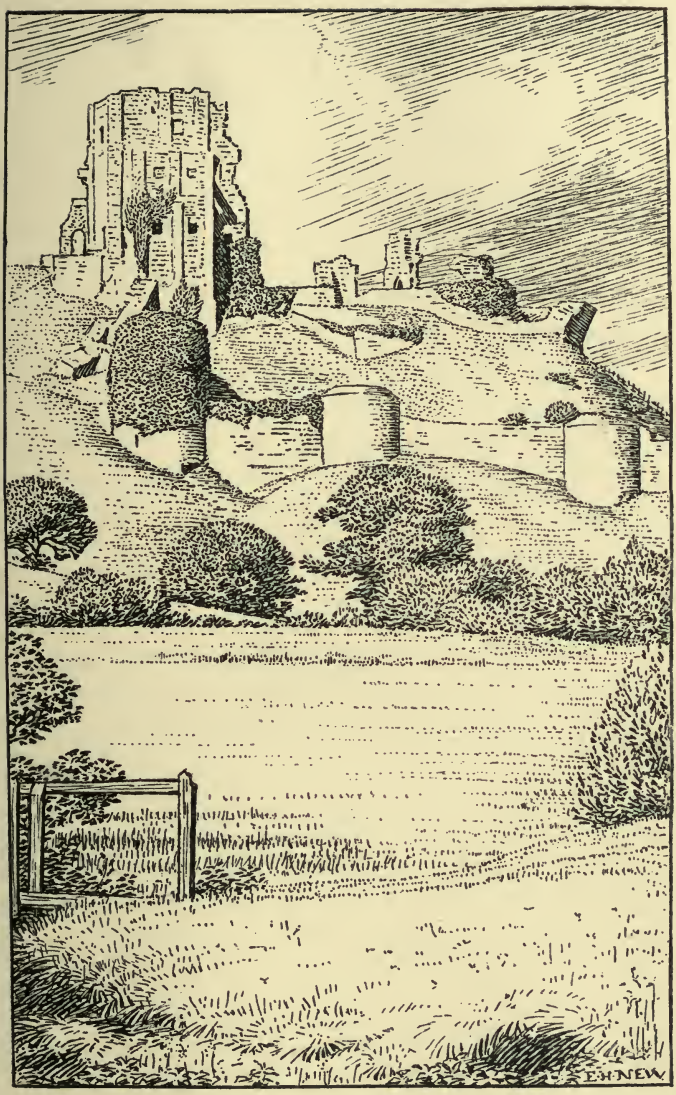
Before the days of artillery, no stronger position for the guarding of this natural gate could possibly be imagined. One gets a better idea of this from a distance, and nowhere better than from the railway as it runs between Wareham and Poole, or from the road over the heath from Bere to the first-named place.

The latter, by the way, is a view that should



ANGLEBURY AND CORVESGATE CASTLE.

certainly not be missed by any person who reaches Wareham. About a mile or so out of the town on the Bere road is a little rise from which Wareham, its earthworks, and its river, with the dark ridge of Purbeck, and Corfe standing sentinel over its only pass in the background, make up a view full of charm, and surprisingly wide and varied, considering the very moderate elevation which has been attained.



CORVESGATE CASTLE.

Corfe Castle is rich in historical associations, only two of which can, however, be touched upon here, one of them connected with the opening, the other with the close of its active career. The former is, of course, the murder of King Eadweard, afterwards known as St. Eadweard the Martyr, by his step-mother, Ælfryth. The unfortunate king had been hunting on the wooded heaths near Wareham, when in an evil hour he bethought himself that he might pay a visit to Ælfryth, then living at her house of Corfe. The treacherous queen either caused him to be stabbed, or, according to another account, stabbed him herself as he was drinking the cup of wine which had been brought for him on his arrival at the castle. After this event Ælfryth retired to Bere, a fact to which attention has already been drawn in connection with that village. The later history of Eadweard's remains is wrapped up in the history of Wareham and of Shaftesbury, their resting-places.

The later event in the history of the castle, which cannot be passed over in silence, is, equally of course, its siege and final demolition by the Parliamentary forces. At the time of the Great Rebellion the castle was in the possession of Lord Chief Justice Bankes, an ancestor of the family of the same name now living at Kingston Lacy. In 1643, the judge then being absent, and the castle occupied by his wife and family, an attempt was made by the Parliamentarians to seize the castle under cover of

the usual stag-hunt which took place on May-day. The story of how the brave lady time after time foiled her opponents, until in 1646 the castle fell by the treachery of one of its own defenders, Lieutenant-Colonel Pitman, is too long to be told here. After the fall of the castle, the victors, annoyed at its long resistance, spent large sums of money in dismantling it, with the results now obvious to the visitor. The vast masses of masonry which project everywhere from the hill, or lie in great boulder-like fragments on its side, offer eloquent testimony alike to their original strength, and to the force which has been used to tear them from their surroundings. One of the most remarkable instances of this is to be met with in the great gateway which leads from the outer to the middle bailey, and marks—so says tradition—the spot of Eadweard's murder. The left half of the archway has been bodily lifted away from the other portion, and stands still erect and solid, some nine feet lower than the right segment, which has retained its original position. At the extreme end of the middle bailey there are numerous traces in the wall of herring-bone work of an early period, perhaps even as early as the days of Ælfryth, and here or hereabouts must have been the place where Ethelberta tied up the lowly but useful animal which had carried her over from Knollsea to the meeting of the Imperial Archæological Association.

"Ethelberta crossed the bridge over the moat and rode under the first archway into the outer ward.

As she had expected, not a soul was here. The arrow-slits, portcullis grooves, and staircases met her eye as familiar friends, for in her childhood she had once paid a visit to the spot. Ascending the green incline, and through another arch into the second ward, she still pressed on, till at last the ass was unable to clamber an inch further. Here she dismounted, and tying him to a stone which projected like a fang from a raw edge of wall, performed the remainder of the ascent on foot. Once among the towers above, she became so interested in the windy corridors, mildewed dungeons, and the tribe of daws peering invidiously upon her from overhead, that she forgot the flight of time."

The fang of stone can easily be identified, for there is but one, and it must be admitted that a less safe place for the tethering of an ass can scarcely be imagined.

The visitor will, of course, follow in the footsteps of Ethelberta through that veritable valley of rocks which leads to the inner bailey and keep, to the chapel and its adjoining buildings. Near by are the remains of the well, said to still contain great store of Bankes' treasure hidden under piles of stones, and the spot where stood the postern gate through which treachery admitted the besiegers to a fortress which otherwise had resisted their attacks.

If one looks across from the castle to the Purbeck heights, an impressive-looking modern church will soon catch the eye. On the opposite or seaward

slope of the hill, hidden in a deep hollow, is Encombe, the original of Enkworth Court, the house of Lord Mountclere, who was the successful competitor for the hand of Ethelberta.

It is possible to journey from Corfe to Swanage by the road, passing through Kingston, the village with the church just mentioned, and thence along the ridge of Purbeck, with the sea on one side and the dark heath on the other. Or the path which Ethelberta chose, along Brenscome Hill and Nine Barrow Down, may be selected, when the traveller will see, as she did, "the country on each side beneath like a map, domains behind domains, parishes by the score, harbours, fir woods, and little inland seas mixing curiously together."

If the tide be in, Poole Harbour, with its many ramifications, is a remarkable and most picturesque feature in the view; and whether the traveller be favoured or not with the sight of such a strife of nature as Ethelberta saw, he can recall the fine passage in which it is described—

"Standing on the top of a giant's grave in this antique land, Ethelberta lifted her eyes to behold two sorts of weather pervading nature at the same time. Far below on the right hand it was a fine day, and the silver sunbeams lighted up a many-armed inland sea, which stretched round an island with fir trees and gorse, and amid brilliant crimson heaths wherein white paths and roads occasionally met the eye in dashes and zigzags like flashes of lightning.

Outside where the broad channel appeared, a berylline and opalized variegation of ripples, currents, deeps, and shallows, lay as fair under the sun as a New Jerusalem, the shores being of gleaming sand. Upon the radiant heather bees and butterflies were busy, she knew, and the birds on that side were just beginning their autumn songs. On the left, quite up to her position, was dark and cloudy weather, shading a valley of heavy greens and browns, which at its further side rose to meet the sea in tall cliffs, suggesting even here at their back how terrible were their aspects seaward in a growling south-west gale. Here grassed hills rose like knuckles gloved in dark olive, and little plantations between them formed a still deeper and sadder monochrome."

The traveller is not, of course, restricted in his choice to the two paths mentioned above, for he can follow the ordinary road through the valley, or, as probably most will prefer to do, he can put himself into the train at Corfe and be more or less rapidly whirled to Swanage. In whichever way he may elect to reach that place—the old name of which, by the way, is Swanwich—he will find it a very different spot from the Knollsea described in "The Hand of Ethelberta." It is no longer possible to speak of it as Charles Kingsley did, as "a quaint old-world village which slopes down to the water over green downs, quarried, like some gigantic rabbit-burrow, with the stone workings of seven hundred years." It must have been at the same period that

Ethelberta resided there when it "was a seaside village lying snug within two headlands as between a finger and thumb. Everybody in the parish who was not a boatman was a quarrier, unless he were the gentleman who owned half the property and had been a quarryman, or the other gentleman who owned the other half and had been to sea. The knowledge of the inhabitants was of the same special sort as their pursuits. The quarrymen in white fustian understood practical geology, the laws and accidents of dips, faults, and cleavage, far better than the ways of the world and mammon ; the seafaring men in Guernsey frocks had a clearer notion of Alexandria, Constantinople, the Cape, and the Indies than of any inland town in their own country. This, for them, consisted of a busy portion, the Channel, where they lived and laboured, and a dull portion, the vague unexplored miles of interior at the back of the ports, which they seldom thought of. Some wives of the village, it is true, had learned to let lodgings, and others to keep shops."

Beyond the usual so-called attractions of a seaside place, and the magnificent walks which are to be had in every direction over the downs, there is not much to detain one in Swanage, though the Hardyite must not leave without seeing the church in which, at the earliest legal moment of the day, Ethelberta Petherwin was transformed into Lady Mountclere. One other episode connected with this

place permits us to give reins to our imagination, for it was here that Raye, the Barrister of the Western Circuit, took his strangely won bride for their honeymoon. As to that event in their lives and what followed after it, one can only say, "The rest is silence."

From Wareham—or, indeed, by boat from Swanage—Poole and Bournemouth can be visited. If a start is made from Wareham, and the road chosen rather than the rail, the traveller will traverse delightful woods, redolent with the odour of pines, and pass through Lytchet Minster. Here is the "Peter's Finger," already alluded to—probably the very inn at which Sol Chickerel and the Hon. Mr. Mountclere waited to obtain fresh horses whilst engaged in their fruitless attempt to prevent Ethelberta's marriage. It was to this place also that Christopher Julian was walking when he met Ethelberta on Egdon Heath.

Poole, when we have reached it, discloses itself to be a quaint, old-fashioned, bygone port, one of those once flourishing harbours which have become almost useless for other than a coasting trade in these days of heavy tonnage. It was easier for a small harbour to be an important naval station in the days when Drake was sailing round the world in *The Golden Hind* of 100 tons burthen, and Howard of Effingham vanquishing the Armada with a fleet of ships which would now be looked upon as small coasting vessels, than it is in this era of giant

battleships and leviathan liners. Many evidences of Poole's former welfare are to be seen in the fine houses of the merchants who lived and made their money there. These are turned now to all sorts of alien purposes. One of the finest of them, still splendid with moulded ceilings, is a reformatory school for girls. In earlier days Poole was celebrated as one of the chief ports connected with the Newfoundland trade, in which, it will be remembered, Shadrach Jollife, the hero of "To please his Wife," was engaged. The scene of this story is laid in Poole—Havenpool as it is called in the tale—and it was in St. James's Church that Shadrach offered up a public thanksgiving for his narrow escape from shipwreck. Poole was also a great place for smugglers and for more daring buccaneers, whose exploits will be found duly recorded in the pages of the County History. The most celebrated of these was Harry Page, called by the French, whose terror he was, Arripay. This intrepid mariner brought home on one occasion no less than one hundred and twenty prizes from the coast of Brittany, and is said "to have scoured the channel of Flanders so powerfully that no ship could pass that way without being taken."

From Poole it is no great distance to Bournemouth, the Sandbourne of the Wessex novels, the place of Tess's habitation with Alec Stoke D'Urberville and of his murder. It is thus described by Mr. Hardy—

"This fashionable watering-place, with its eastern and its western stations, its piers, its groves of pines, its promenades, and its covered gardens, was, to Angel Clare, like a fairy place suddenly created by the stroke of a wand, and allowed to get a little dusty. An outlying tract of the enormous Egdon Waste was close at hand, yet on the very verge of that tawny piece of antiquity such a glittering novelty as this pleasure city had chosen to spring up. Within the space of a mile from its outskirts every irregularity of the soil was prehistoric, every channel an undisturbed British trackway; not a sod having been turned there since the days of the Cæsars. Yet the exotic had grown here, suddenly as the prophet's gourd; and had drawn hither Tess. By the midnight lamps he went up and down the winding ways of this new world in an old one, and could discern between the trees and against the stars the lofty roofs, chimneys, gazebos, and towers of the numerous fanciful residences of which the place was composed. It was a city of detached mansions; a Mediterranean lounging-place on the English Channel; and as seen now by night it seemed even more imposing than it was. The sea was near at hand, but not intrusive; it murmured, and he thought it was the pines; the pines murmured in precisely the same tones, and he thought they were the sea."

Of this city of pleasure Christopher Julian's father, in his days of prosperity, had been one

of the magnates, and here it was that the son first met Picotee Chickerell, Ethelberta's younger sister. Picotee was then a teacher, and this reminds one that two of the girls of the Wessex novels were at school here—Rosa Halborough, the sister of the two brothers whose clerical aspirations form the theme of the "Tragedy of Two Ambitions;" and Avice, the third of that name in whom the image of the Well-Beloved temporarily resided. Apart from the D'Urberville murder, one other tragedy is associated with this place, for it was here that Sue Bridehead's friend was buried—the Christminster student, whose heart she broke, as she afterwards helped to break that of the luckless Jude.

RINGS-HILL SPEER.

CHAPTER XVII

WARBORNE TO MELCHESTER

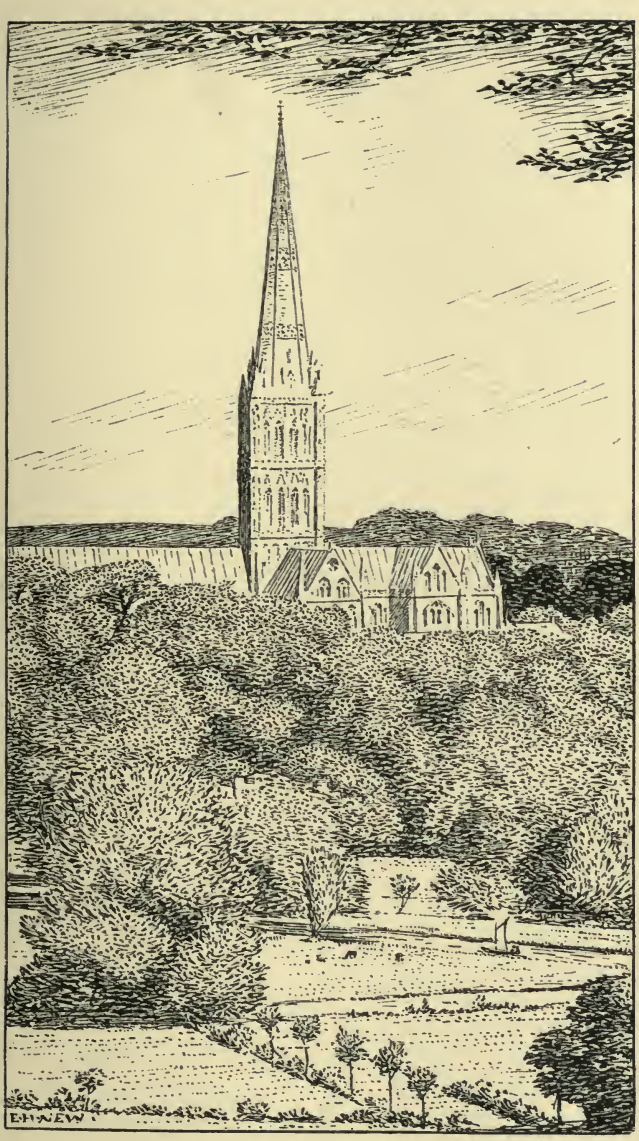
WIMBORNE, the Warborne of "Two on a Tower," is a trivial little town, possessing, however, in its church an object of the first interest to the antiquarian. Its fine monuments, its quaint orrery clock, its ancient parish chest made from the trunk of a single tree—a kind of "dug-out" safe—and its unusually large library of chained books, one of them a standing testimony to the carelessness of Matthew Prior, should not be overlooked by pilgrims to the Hardy country, though these objects have no connection with any of the novels. As far as that aspect of the case is concerned, indeed, there

is little to be seen but the unromantic railway station which is connected with the goings and comings of the enamoured Viviette and her visitors, and the school where Swithin St. Cleeve was educated. But around Warborne are several places associated with the Wessex novels, and three houses in more or less close proximity are introduced into the tale of "Barbara of the House of Grebe."

Canford Manor, a modern house erected on the

CHENE MANOR.

site of a series of older mansions, of which it contains some fragments, is the original of Chene Manor, the abode of Barbara's father—"an imposing edifice, or rather congeries of edifices. One wing showed extreme antiquity, having huge chimneys, whose substructures projected from the external walls like towers ; and a kitchen of vast dimensions, in which (it was said) breakfasts had been cooked for John of Gaunt." No difficulty will be found in discovering



MELCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

this mansion, but it is perhaps not quite so easy to find the original of Yewsholt, the house intended for the occupation of Barbara and Edmond Willowes, "a small place on the plan of a large one—a cottage built in the form of a mansion, having a central hall with a wooden gallery running round it, and rooms no bigger than closets to follow this introduction. It stood on a slope so solitary, and surrounded by trees so dense, that the birds who inhabited the boughs sang at strange hours, as if they hardly could distinguish night from day."

This house, the real name of which is Farrs, stands on a high bank on the right-hand side of the road leading to Cowgrove, and may be recognized, apart from its agreeing with the description given above, by its possession of green Venetian shutters.

The third house will be dealt with at a later stage of our journey.

If the road leading to Farrs be followed through Sturminster Marshall it will be found to lead to Charborough, the Welland House of "Two on a Tower," and no one who sees the tower here will be likely to fail to recognize it as, at least architecturally, the original of that from the summit of which Swithin St. Cleeve watched the movements of the heavenly bodies. In an earlier chapter it has been pointed out that certain of the features of the tower of the story were taken from the obelisk at Weatherbury Castle, but here at Charborough we have the tower "built in the Tuscan order of

architecture," which is "really a tower, being hollow with steps inside." The house itself, which is not such a prominent object in the landscape, must be seen to be appreciated.

From this diversion from the Salisbury road with which this chapter is supposed to deal, we must return to Wimborne, and betake ourselves northwards for some seven miles before we reach our next stopping-place, which is at the cross roads to Horton and Gussage. Here is a smart-looking hostel, the Horton Inn, which is the original of the "solitary wayside tavern called Lornton Inn—the rendezvous of many a daring poacher for operations in the adjoining forest," where Barbara Grebe met Edmond Willowes on the night of their elopement, and where, at a later date, she encountered Lord Uplandtowers, whilst awaiting the return of her husband from abroad. A little further along and to the west of the road is Wimborne St. Giles, the original of Knollingwood, Lord Uplandtowers' mansion, and the third of the three houses previously mentioned—a place dear to the horticultural mind as the first home of that useful plant, the cabbage, in England.

The next place to be reached by the main road is Cranborne, the Chasetown of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," a little decayed market town, possessing, however, a perfect gem of a manor-house, the property of Lord Salisbury, whose eldest son takes his title from the place. Over

one or the doors of this house are the figures of Justice and Mercy, in allusion to its former use as the Court, where offences committed in the neighbouring Chase were adjudicated upon. Leland described Cranborne as "a praty thorroghfair, and for one streat meatly well builded;" and perhaps it may have been so in his day, but there is little enough to attract the visitor of to-day beyond the manor-house and church, both of which should be seen. The inn called the "Flower-de-Luce" in the story, will be recognized in the Fleur-de-Lys.

As the hill beyond the town is ascended, the traveller will see "the soft azure landscape of the Chase—a truly venerable tract of forest-land, one of the few remaining woodlands in England of undoubted primæval date, wherein Druidical mistletoe was still found on aged oaks, and where enormous yew trees, not planted by the hand of man, grew as they had grown when they were pollarded for bows." The Chase is now much shrunken in size, for it once extended from Salisbury to Blandford and Wimborne with a circuit of eighty miles; nor can this decrease in size be looked upon as altogether a disadvantage, for even in the first third of the nineteenth century it was the resort of every kind of bad character, a real forest Alsatia. But many beautiful fragments of forest scenery are still to be found within its ancient limits, and one of these is the spot associated with the most tragic event in the history of Tess of the D'Urbervilles. The road next

passes through the hamlet of Boveridge, where Georgy Crookhill lost his clothes, as narrated in the tales of the "Crusted Characters." Near here is a house, which may perhaps be looked upon as corresponding in situation with that in which the Stoke D'Urbervilles lived, though the visitor must not expect to find anywhere about a red-brick edifice, looking like "a geranium bloom against the subdued colours around it." Beyond Boveridge there is a long stretch of road making its way over open rolling downs, before Salisbury is reached. In places it passes through portions of the woods of the old Chase, though the largest fragments of this still in existence are a few miles off to the left in the neighbourhood of Tollard Royal. Here still stands the old alarum tree, or Larmer Tree, as it is now called, at which the huntsman used to sound his horn to call together those who were to take part in the chase.

But at last the road approaches Salisbury, lying in its snug valley, the "Sink of the Plain," with its majestic cathedral spire—

> "The thin steeple
> That tops the fair fane of Poore's olden
> Episcopal see."

Salisbury, the Melchester of the Wessex novels, is a city which, like Dorchester, has its early history inseparably connected with that of a neighbouring earthwork, the great fortification of Old Sarum,

some miles to the north of the modern city. This was one of the places to which Raye strolled with Anna, when he should have been attending to his legal business on the Western Circuit. It is still much as Pepys described it, when he recorded that on his journey west he "saw a great fortification, and there light and to it and in it, and find it prodigious, so as to frighten one to be in it all alone at night." This mighty earthwork, after having been the stronghold of various successive races, was deserted in the thirteenth century by the ecclesiastics, who, finding that the close quarters in which they and the military occupants of the citadel were obliged to live was not conducive to comfort, removed at that period to the lower site on which Salisbury stands. From this event dates the gradual decay of Old Sarum, which can never have been a very comfortable place of residence; for as Peter of Blois, a canon of the Cathedral Church of Old Sarum, puts it—

> "Est ibi defectus aquae, sed copia cretae
> Saevit ibi ventus, sed Philomela silet."

Eventually the two members whom the elector—there is said to have been but one, and the tree under which he exercised the franchise is still shown—returned to Parliament, were taken from Old Sarum by the first Reform Bill, and it now remains an object of interest to the antiquarian alone. New Sarum, the child of this ancient relic of prehistoric

times, is permeated by a series of streams, which fact led some of the older writers to compare it with Venice. Indeed, the epitaph of one Mr. Francis Hide, who died in Venice, whilst secretary to the embassy there, bears the lines—

> "Born in the English Venice, thou dost lie,
> Dear friend, in the Italian Salisbury."

The city is, of course, full of things of interest, which cannot be enumerated in a book the purpose of which is to direct the attention of its readers mainly to objects associated with incidents in the Wessex novels. Pursuing this plan, the first spot to visit is the market-place, where "Charles Bradford Raye, Esquire, stuff-gownsman, educated at Wintoncester, called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, now going the Western Circuit, merely detained in Melchester by a small arbitration after his brethren had moved on to the next county town," first made the acquaintance of the young servant-girl with whom his fortunes were afterwards to be so closely associated. One of the houses looking into the square is "the dignified residence of considerable size" in which the servant-maid lived with her mistress, that female Cyrano de Bergerac, whose personality mingled in so complicated a manner with the destinies of the younger pair.

The Cathedral is connected with the incident of the making up of the quarrel between Ethelberta and Lord Mountclere, the peer having brought his

intended bride to Melchester with the covert object of finding out whether she was really attached to young Julian, the sub-organist. After studying the other objects of interest in the building, the Hardyite must not omit to look for the tomb of a celebrated member of the Turberville family, which is to be found on the north side of the west door of the nave. This is no less a personage than D'Albigny Turberville, M.D., the oculist consulted by Pepys and every other person of his time unfortunate enough to suffer from eye-disease, who could afford the expenses of the journey and the surgeon's fees. He died at the age of eighty-five, in 1696, and his arms show him to have belonged to that family from which the ill-fated Tess was afterwards to spring. His epitaph, of which some lines are given below, does not err on the side of modesty; but there is this much to be said about it, that the man whom it commemorates did actually in his day outshine in reputation, so far as his own specialty went, all other surgeons in this country.

"Ophthalmiae scientia adeo praecelluit
Ut Ipse solus ab omni terrarum parte
Pulchre notus fuerit et Celebratus
Cujus Fama, hoc Marmore perennior nunquam peribit.

. . . . . .

Oh nostram omnium sorte lugendam
Quali fruebamur, dum enituit virtus
Quanto privamur, cum infra jacet extinctus
Solus Oculorum Aesculapius."

After quitting the Cathedral, on the repairs of which it will be remembered that Jude, during a part of his wandering life, was engaged, the Training College for teachers, "an ancient edifice of the fifteenth century, once a palace, now a training school, with mullioned and transomed windows, and a courtyard in front shut in from the road by a wall," where Sue Bridehead resided, will be seen on one side of the close. Two fine old inns in the city are associated with the tale of "The First Countess of Wessex"—the White Hart at which Mrs. Dornell and her daughter were staying, and the Red Lion where the latter met her husband, Stephen Reynard.

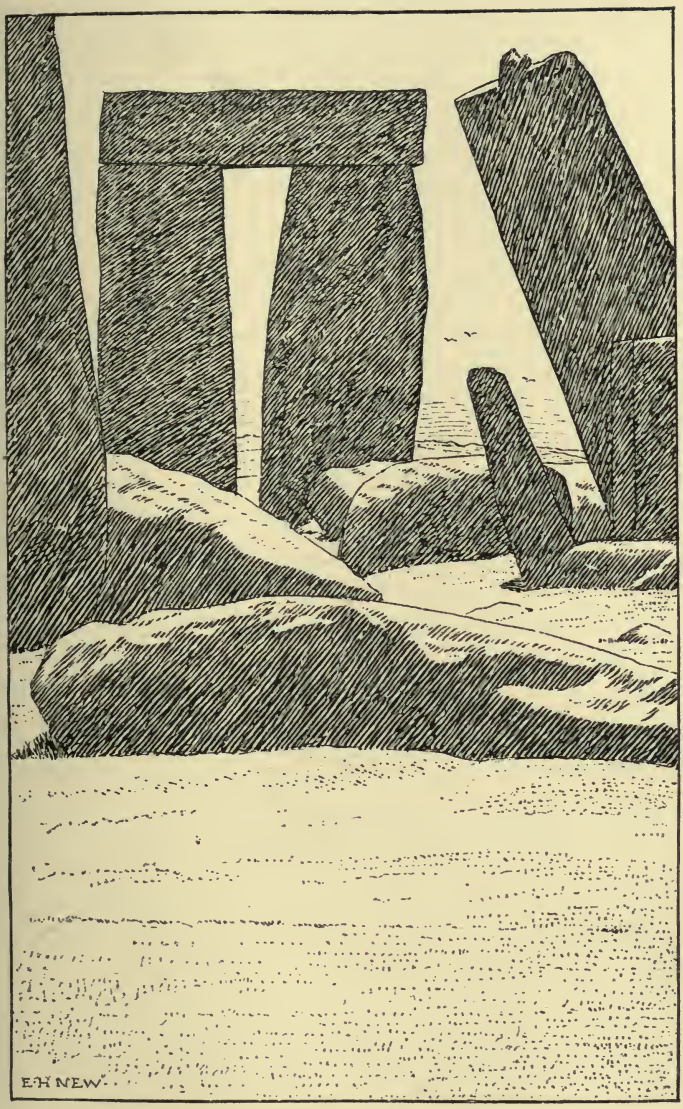
"'Twice we met by accident,' pleaded Betty. 'Once at Abbot's Cernel, and another time at the Red Lion, Melchester.'

"'O thou deceitful girl!' cried Mrs. Dornell. 'An accident took you to the Red Lion whilst I was staying at the White Hart! I remember—you came in at twelve o'clock at night, and said you'd been to see the cathedral by the light of the moon!'

"'My ever-honoured mamma, so I had! I only went to the Red Lion with him afterwards.'

"'Oh, Betty, Betty! That my child should have deceived me even in my widowed days!'

"'But, my dearest mamma, you made me marry him!' says Betty with spirit; 'and of course I've to obey him more than you now!'"



STONEHENGE.

Of course, the visitor will not leave the city without having seen the almost unrivalled Museum, and there discovered the broadsheets relating to the fears of Napoleonic invasion, of which mention has been already made. Equally of course Stonehenge must be visited whilst one is in this part of the world, on account of its great intrinsic interest, and because it is the scene of the capture of Tess by the officers of justice after the murder of Alec Stoke D'Urberville.

"'What monstrous place is this?' said Angel.

"'It hums,' said she. 'Hearken!'

"He listened. The wind playing upon the edifice produced a booming tune, like the music of some gigantic one-stringed harp. No other sound came from it, and lifting his hand and advancing a step or two, Clare felt the vertical surface of the wall. It seemed to be of solid stone, without joint or moulding. Carrying his fingers onward, he found that what he had come in contact with was a colossal rectangular pillar; by stretching out with his left hand he could feel a similar one adjoining. At an indefinite height overhead something made the black sky blacker, which had the semblance of a vast architrave uniting the pillars horizontally. They carefully entered beneath and between; the surfaces echoed their soft rustle; but they seemed to be still out-of-doors. The place was roofless. Tess drew her breath fearfully, and Angel, perplexed, said—

"'What can it be?'

"Feeling sideways, they encountered another tower-like pillar, square and uncompromising as the first; beyond it another and another. The place was all doors and pillars, some connected above by continuous architraves.

"'A very Temple of the Winds,' he said.

"The next pillar was isolated; others composed a trilithon; others were prostrate, their flanks forming a causeway wide enough for a carriage; and it was soon obvious that they made up a forest of monoliths grouped upon the grassy expanse of the plain. The couple advanced further into this pavilion of the night till they stood in its midst.

"'It is Stonehenge!' said Clare.

"'The heathen temple, you mean?'

"'Yes. Older than the centuries; older than the D'Urbervilles.'"

BATHSHEBA EVERDENE'S HOUSE.

CHAPTER XVIII

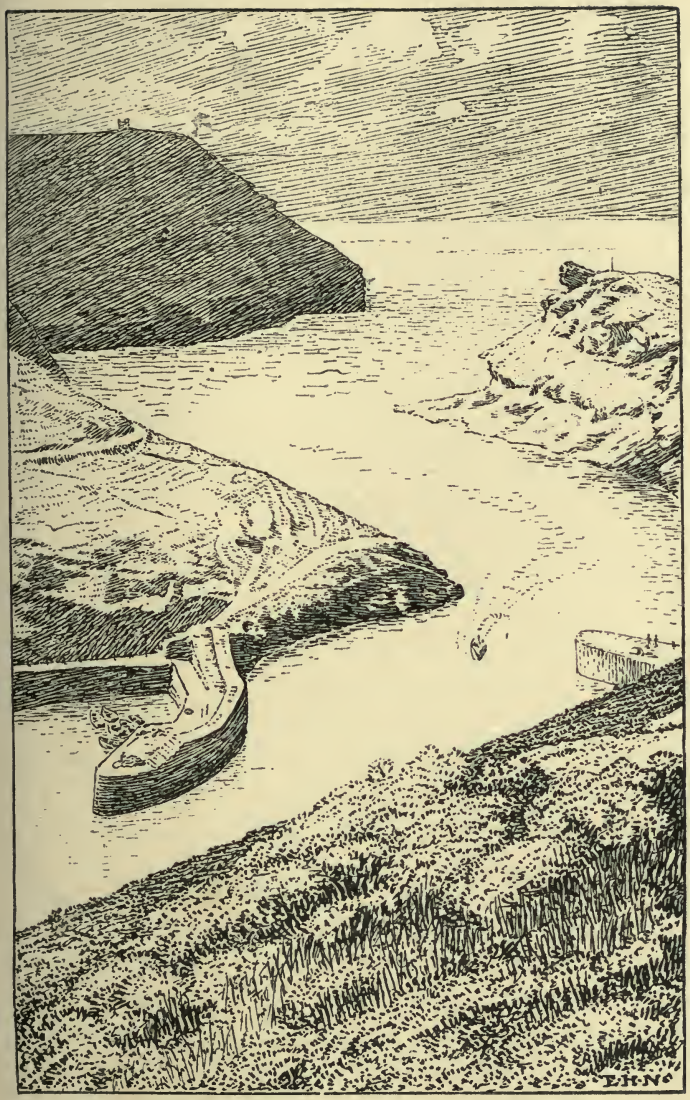
THE NOVELS

"Desperate Remedies"—"Under the Greenwood Tree"—"A Pair of Blue Eyes"—"Far from the Madding Crowd"—"The Hand of Ethelberta"—"The Return of the Native."

IN the previous chapters of this book the country has been taken as the basis of consideration, and as each place has been dealt with, the events connected with it, in whatever novel or story

they may have occurred, have been noted. In the remaining pages it is intended rapidly to review the novels with the intention of giving a topographical scheme of each. By this means those readers who may wish to follow the line of country belonging to any particular novel can do so, whilst the writer will be able, in the midst of a certain amount of unavoidable repetition, to deal with some places which, on account of their distance from the heart of Wessex, have been left untouched in the previous chapters.

With respect to their topographical characters, the novels fall readily into two categories—the stay-at-home stories and the wandering stories. Of the former class, "The Return of the Native" and "The Trumpet-Major" may be taken as examples, for in both of these the scene of action is limited to a small area of one county. In the other group, for which "The Hand of Ethelberta," "Jude the Obscure," and "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" may stand as instances, there is constant change of scene, incidents occurring at places wide apart from one another. In the first-mentioned of these stories the reader is whisked rapidly from London to Dorset, and from Dorset to London, and is even carried across the Channel to Rouen to behold the pitiable spectacle of an elderly but deeply enamoured nobleman toiling painfully up the church spire in the hope of obtaining a favourable moment for the presentation of his suit. Into these distant realms it is no part of the object of this book, avowedly



CASTLE BOTEREL.

devoted to the region of Wessex, to follow the characters.

Taking the novels in their chronological order, the first to come up for consideration is "DESPERATE REMEDIES," a tale mostly connected with Weymouth and the immediate neighbourhood of Dorchester. The death of Mr. Graye in some town outside Wessex drives his children to Weymouth as a place to earn a living. Whilst there an excursion is made to Lulworth, whence Owen starts out to inspect Corfe Castle, but fails to reach the boat before its departure, thus giving his friend Edward Springrove the opportunity of making Cynthia's acquaintance. The girl's later adventures as lady's maid or companion—in fact, the scenes of the latter two-thirds of the book—occur at Kingston House, near Stinsford. Tolchurch, however, at the re-building of which Owen was engaged as clerk of the works, is Tolpuddle, a village some miles from Dorchester on the road to Bere.

"UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE" is one of the stories which compresses all its scenery into a very narrow area. Yellowham Wood, on the road between Dorchester and Puddletown, is the Yalbury Great Wood of which Geoffrey Day was keeper, and where Dick and Fancy went nutting. Close by the wood is the village where the Deweys lived, and where the little school-house still stands Under the Greenwood Tree, as Mr. New has shown in his drawing. A visit to Weymouth with fateful

consequences to Fancy's future, and another walk to Dorchester, in the course of which the Rev. Mr. Maybold learnt a few facts about feminine character previously unknown to him, are the only wanderings from the central scene of the tale.

"A Pair of Blue Eyes," a story which has barely been mentioned in the earlier part of the book, has its scene, as its author tells us in the preface to the latest edition, in "the furthest westward of all those convenient corners wherein I have ventured to erect my theatre for these imperfect little dramas of country life and passions; and it lies near to, or no great way beyond, the vague border of the Wessex kingdom on that side, which, like the westering verge of modern American settlements, was progressive and uncertain." As a matter of fact, the scene of the story is laid near Boscastle in Cornwall, the Castle Boterel of the book, a place which owes its name to the fact that it was once the seat of the Norman family of De Bottreaux, whose castle is now represented only by one grassy mound.

"*Botreaux* Castelle, vulgo *Boscastel*," says Leland, who adds, "The Toune of *Boscastelle* lyith upon the Brow of a rokky Hille by South Est, and so goith down by length to the Northe toward the se, but not even ful hard to it. It is a very filthy Toun and il kept. There is a church in it, as I remembre, of S. Simpherian. The Lorde *Bottreaux* was Lord of this Toun, a man of an old *Cornish* Linage, and had a *Maner* Place, a Thing of smaul Reputation,

as it is now, far onworthe the name of a Castel. The People ther caulle it *the Courte*. Ther cummith down a little broke from South Est out of the Hilles therby, and so running by the west side of the Towne goeth into *Severn* Se betwixt 2. Hylles, and ther maketh a pore Havenet, but of no certaine Salvegarde."

The narrow winding harbour thus alluded to, said to be a kind of reproduction of that of Balaclava in miniature, is well represented in the frontispiece to the novel in the collected edition. The characteristics of Endelstow are taken from a village known as St. Juliot's, a short distance from Boscastle, and perhaps the lofty height of Willapark Point may be looked upon as the prototype of the cliff without a name.

"The place," says Mr. Hardy, speaking of Castle Boterel and its surroundings, "is pre-eminently (for one person at least) the region of dream and mystery. The ghostly birds, the pall-like sea, the frothy wind, the eternal soliloquy of the waters, the bloom of dark purple cast, that seems to exhale from the shoreward precipices, in themselves lend to the scene an atmosphere like the twilight of a night vision."

The scene of the story is shifted on two or more occasions to London, and on one of these occasions the return is made by steamer along the southern coast, as has already been mentioned in connection with the account of Portland in Chapter XIV.

"Far from the Madding Crowd" opens at

Norcombe Hill, by which may be understood one of the hills in the neighbourhood of Eggardon, between Dorchester and Bridport. In this district there is more than one eminence which answers to the description given in the tale of the hill as "a featureless convexity of chalk and soil—an ordinary specimen of those smoothly outlined protuberances of the globe which may remain undisturbed on some great day of confusion, when far grander heights and dizzy granite precipices topple down. The hill was covered on its northern side by an ancient and decaying plantation of beeches, whose upper verge formed a line over the crest, fringing its arched curve against the sky, like a mane." In this spot Oak first makes the acquaintance of his skittish Bathsheba. After the calamity brought upon him by the superabundant zeal of the dog George, he follows her unwittingly through Dorchester, where the scene of the hiring-fair, at which the shepherd may have been said to have touched low-water mark, occurs, to Puddletown. In the first part of this journey, from the vicinity of Eggardon to Dorchester, both beloved and lover must have followed the same road, though in the opposite direction, as that pursued by the wanderer in search of Cicely, after he had left Casterbridge.

"Triple-ramparted Maidon gloomed grayly
Above me from southward,
And north the hill-fortress of Eggar,
And square Pummerie.
The Nine-Pillared Cromlech, the Bride-streams."

The two last-mentioned places are both actually on the road. The former is a ring of low stones, called the Nine Stones, close to the edge of the highway, and about half a mile beyond Winterbourne Abbas in the Bridport direction. The latter is a beautiful spring of water which forms the head of the pretty stream of the Bride, which flows away westward and enters the sea near Burton Bradstock.

Puddletown, the Weatherbury of the tale, now becomes and remains the scene of most of the events of the story; in fact, it is the central point of the book. In addition to what has been said about it at a previous page, it may be added that, as Mr. Hardy tells us in his preface, "the ancient malt-house, which was formerly so characteristic of the parish, has been pulled down these twenty years; also most of the thatched and dormered cottages that were once lifeholds."

Nor must the visitor expect to find the barn of the sheep-shearing, the description of which so well depicts those ancient monastic edifices scattered all over the country, of which so fine an example is to be seen at Abbotsbury. The account of the great barn of the story must not be omitted, for it is perhaps as fine a word-picture as even Mr. Hardy has ever drawn.

"On ground plan," he says, "it resembled a church with transepts. It not only emulated the form of the neighbouring church of the parish, but vied with it in antiquity. Whether the barn had

ever formed one of a group of conventual buildings, nobody seemed to be aware ; no trace of such surroundings remained. The vast porches at the sides, lofty enough to admit a waggon laden to its highest with corn in the sheaf, were spanned by heavy-pointed arches of stone, broadly and boldly cut, whose very simplicity was the origin of a grandeur not apparent in erections where more ornament has been attempted. The dusky, filmed, chestnut roof, braced and tied in by huge collars, curves, and diagonals, was far nobler in design, because more wealthy in material, than nine-tenths of those in our modern churches. Along each side wall was a range of striding buttresses, throwing deep shadows on the spaces between them, which were perforated by lancet openings, combining in their proportions the precise requirements both of beauty and ventilation. One could say about this barn, what could hardly be said of either the church or the castle, akin to it in age and style, that the purpose which had dictated its original erection was the same with that to which it was still applied. Unlike and superior to those two typical remnants of mediævalism, the old barn embodied practices which had suffered no mutilation at the hands of time. Here at least the spirit of the ancient builders was at one with the spirit of the modern beholder."

From Puddletown, the story, for brief intervals, diverges into other districts, mostly in the immediate neighbourhood. The chief of these is Dorchester,

where Bathsheba flits through the corn-market amongst the heavier figures of the men "like a chaise between carts, was heard after them as a romance after sermons, was felt among them like

MELLSTOCK CHURCH.

a breeze among furnaces;" where Fanny Robin laid down her life at the workhouse, and where Boldwood gave himself up at the gaol after the murder of Troy. Troy himself visits Lulworth, where it

was supposed that he was drowned, and is again seen of men at the great cattle-fair at Woodbury Hill above Bere.

A distant place, not yet alluded to in these pages, is introduced in the shape of Bath, to which Troy and his love make their way for the sake of securing a quiet marriage ; "a curious place, to say the least," as Matthew Moon called it, after hearing the description given by Cainy Ball. "Great glass windows to the shops, and great clouds in the sky, full of rain, and old wooden trees in the country round," is Cainy's account of what he had seen.

"'You stun-poll! What will ye say next?' said Coggan.

"'Let en alone,' interposed Joseph Poorgrass. 'The boy's maning is that the sky and the earth in the kingdom of Bath is not altogether different from ours here. 'Tis for our good to gain knowledge of strange cities, and as such the boy's words should be suffered, so to speak it.'

"'And the people of Bath,' continued Cain, 'never need to light their fires except as a luxury, for the water springs up out of the earth ready boiled for use.'

"''Tis true as the light,' testified Matthew Moon. 'I've heard other navigators say the same thing.'

"'They drink nothing else there,' said Cain, 'and seem to enjoy it, to see how they swaller it down.'

ENKWORTH

"'Well, it seems a barbarian practice enough to us, but I dare say the natives think nothing o' it,' said Matthew.

"'And don't victuals spring up as well as drink?' asked Coggan, twirling his eye.

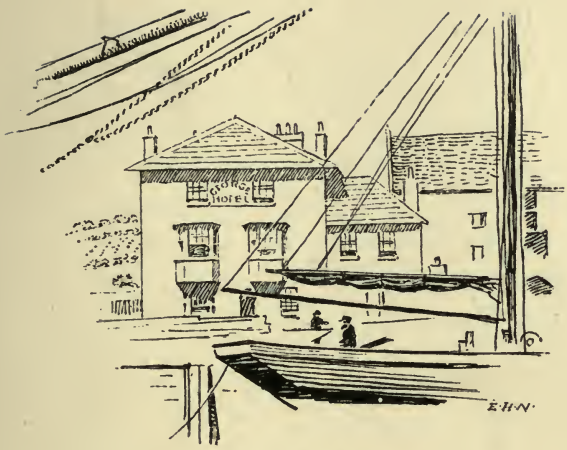
"'No—I own to a blot there in Bath—a true blot. God didn't provide 'em with victuals as well as drink, and 'twas a drawback I couldn't get over at all.'"

Bath evidently seems to Mr. Hardy a suitable spot for the performance of a secret marriage, for he makes Viviette, the owner of the Tower, and St. Cleeve, her astronomer, visit it for the same purpose.

"The Hand of Ethelberta" has its scenery on a more extensive canvas than perhaps any other of the novels. The story commences at Wareham, where Ethelberta and her mother-in-law were stopping at the Red Lion Inn, and on the part of Egdon Heath adjacent to the town Julian met his former lover. The young organist was then on his way to Lytchet as an intermediate stage on his journey to Bournemouth, where he was residing with his sister, and in the neighbourhood of which he first came across Picotee. After a time of London and of a house near Bournemouth, Ethelberta is found at Swanage, from which place she visits Corfe Castle and Encombe. Afterwards we meet her at Rouen, and at Salisbury, where she quarrels with her elderly lover and is again reconciled to him. She returns to Swanage

for the purpose of being married, and is left as the ruler of her husband and his mansion at Encombe.

"The Return of the Native" has a circumscribed district, the action being almost entirely confined to a small part of Egdon Heath, in which are situated the houses of Mrs. Yeobright and of Captain Vye, as well as the inn, the Quiet Woman, round which so much of the story centres. Wareham, at which the mistake in connection with Tamsin's marriage was made, and Affpuddle, near which Clym's cottage was, are at some little distance—a few miles only—from that part of the country with which the story is especially connected.



PORT BREDY—THE HARBOUR.

CHAPTER XIX

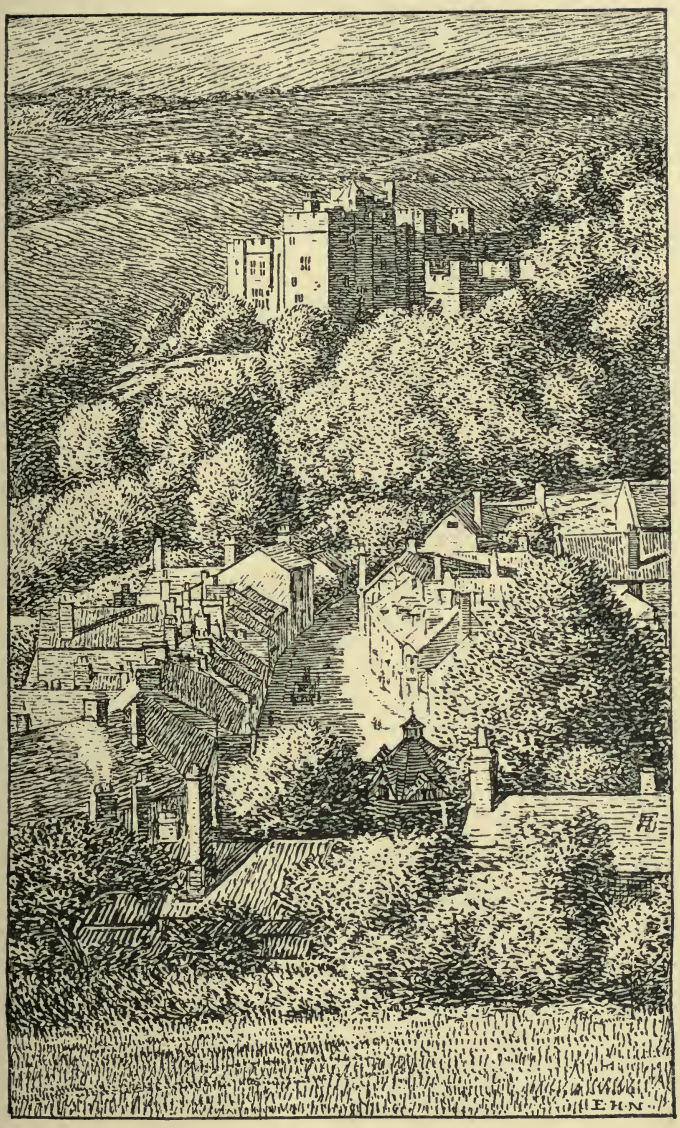
THE NOVELS

"The Trumpet-Major"—"The Laodicean"—"Two on a Tower"—"The Mayor of Casterbridge"—"The Woodlanders"—"The Wessex Tales."

"THE TRUMPET-MAJOR" may well be called the Weymouth story, for though the mill where the Lovedays and the Garlands resided is a few miles from that town, the events of the tale are largely associated with the watering-place made famous by the third George, and places near to it, such as Portland, to which Anne journeyed to see the last of the *Victory*, carrying her sailor sweetheart

to the wars, and Radipole where she met and conversed with the king. Sutton Poyntz, from which Weymouth now obtains its supply of water, is the place where the mill stood. On the downs above, the camp was pitched whose occupants must have introduced so much colour into the quiet existence of the little village. Here, too, is that well-known figure of the king on horseback, visible from Weymouth and many another point in the country around. Two places mentioned in the story—Poxwell Manor, the home of old Derriman, and the Faringdon ruin, scene of a well-known conversation between the Trumpet-Major and Anne—have each of them been placed nearer to Sutton Poyntz in the story than their actual position with regard to that village. Portisham, where Captain Hardy lived, and was visited by Bob, lies on the way to Abbotsbury, under the shadow of the downs on which the Hardy monument stands.

"The Laodicean" is less topographically accurate than any other novel of the series. Indeed, apart from choosing a building as the prototype of his castle, Mr. Hardy does not seem to have cared to make his tale fit the actual facts of the district at all. The castle itself is thus described. It "was not exceptionally large, but it had all the characteristics of its most important fellows. Irregular, dilapidated, and muffled in creepers as a great portion of it was, some part—a comparatively modern wing—was inhabited, for a light or two steadily gleamed from



STANCY CASTLE.

some upper windows ; in others a reflection of the moon denoted that unbroken glass yet filled their casements. Over all rose the keep, a square solid tower, apparently not much injured by wars or weather, and darkened with ivy on one side, wherein wings could be heard flapping uncertainly, as if they belonged to a bird unable to find a proper perch. Hissing noises supervened, and then a hoot, proclaiming that a brood of young owls were residing there in the company of older ones. In spite of the habitable and more modern wing, neglect and decay had set their mark upon the outworks of the pile, unfitting them for a more positive light than that of the present hour." The original of the edifice thus depicted is the well-known castle at Dunster, that charming little Somerset watering-place, which nestles under the cover of an outlier of Exmoor. Now the seat of the Luttrell family, it was originally a possession of the powerful family of De Mohun or De Moion. It was held for the Parliamentary party by the Luttrell of the period, during the Civil War, but afterwards surrendered, and was garrisoned for the king under the governorship of Colonel Francis Windham. The gatehouse alluded to in the novel, and described by Leland as a "fair tourre by north cummyng into the castle," was built probably about 1417 by Sir Hugh Luttrell. Some relics of another fortress in the same district, traditionally said to have belonged to a family of the name of De Lancy, suggested to Mr. Hardy the title of De Stancy,

which he gives to his castle and to its former occupants.

"Two on a Tower" is another novel with a restricted horizon topographically, since the events described therein, with the single exception of the journey of the hero and heroine to Bath for the purpose of getting married, all take place at Charborough, the original of Welland House. The composite nature of the tower in the story has already been alluded to at an earlier page. Wimborne, under the title of Warborne, is also alluded to in this story, chiefly as the railway station for Welland House. It also was the place where the precocious Swithin St. Cleeve was educated, as Lady Constantine's rustic informant gave her to know. "At Warborne—a place where they draw up young gam'sters' brains like rhubarb under a ninepenny pan, my lady, excusing my common way. They hit so much larning into en that 'a could talk like the day of Pentecost; which is a wonderful thing for a simple boy, and his mother only the plainest cipher-ing woman in the world. Warborne Grammar School—that's where 'twas 'a went to."

"The Mayor of Casterbridge" is, of course, essentially the Dorchester novel; for though that capital of Wessex plays a part in so many of the tales, with none is it so much associated as with this, which deals with the life of the Man of Character who was its chief magistrate. The tale commences in a remote part of Wessex, at Weyhill, called

Weydon Priors in the novel, a spot famous still for its great autumnal fair—the fair at which the selling of his wife by Henchard took place. That such a method of disposing of one's partner for life is a perfectly legal form of divorce, is an idea which probably still lurks in rustic minds. It certainly did at the time of the novel, for Mr. Roberts, in his "Social History of the Southern Counties," says that, being in Honiton about the beginning of the last century, he saw a man lead forth his wife with a halter round her neck, and sell her for eighteenpence. The purchaser led off his bargain, and it was said by the bystanders that he was the man whom they had thought most likely to invest his money in this unusual piece of merchandise. After the episode of the sale, the story, which concerns itself chiefly with Dorchester, Fordington, and a few neighbouring villages, never strays very far from its centre; the forgotten Henchard ending his days no further off than the neighbouring and gloomy recesses of Egdon Heath.

"The Woodlanders" deals with the district around Middlemarsh, at the foot of High Stoy Hill. The Hintocks include this place and the Minternes, at the larger of which Giles Winterbourne was buried. Many of the features of Little Hintock were, however, borrowed from Melbury Osmond, a village not far from Evershead, on the other side of the railway line between Dorchester and Yeovil. The market town of the district, the metropolis of

"The Woodlanders," is Sherborne, the fine old monastic foundation on the boundary of Somerset. Milton Abbey, to which Mrs. Charmond went for a visit, and Okeford Fitzpaine, the ancestral seat of the family of Dr. Fitzpiers, are comparatively neighbouring places also mentioned in the novels.

It has previously been pointed out that Great Hintock House, the residence of Mrs. Charmond, is not to be found in the actual country of "The Woodlanders," but at Turnworth, some distance to the east, and no great way from Blandford Forum.

"The Wessex Tales." The scene of the seaside place, called Solentsea, at which Ella Marchmill, the "*Imaginative Woman*," and her husband spent their summer holiday, is Southsea, the "island opposite" being, of course, the Isle of Wight.

Higher Crowstairs, the cottage at which the "*Three Strangers*" arrived on that tempestuous night which was to usher in the last morning on earth of Timothy Summers, the Shottsford clockmaker, is on the downs above Cerne Abbas, and is simply a typical shepherd's cottage, no actual edifice having been taken as its prototype.

The scene of "*The Withered Arm*" is laid at East Stoke Farm, no great distance from Wool and Bindon. Rhoda Brook's cottage was not far off on an adjacent part of Egdon Heath. The direct way from the farm to Dorchester, as the story says, is through Tincleton (Stickleford), but the path pursued by Gertrude Lodge to the White Hart,

where she was to stay until the execution was over, lay south of this, and probably was along the road which runs near Moreton and through West Stafford. The gruesome superstition on which the story is founded is one which was firmly believed in, at an earlier day. Hunt, in his "Romances and Drolls," says that he once saw a young woman led on to the scaffold in the Old Bailey for the purpose of having a wen touched with the hand of a man who had just been executed; and in "Choice Notes" (Folk-Lore) from *Notes and Queries*, it is stated that to cure a wen, the hand of the dead but still hanging criminal must be passed thrice over the tumour. "Many persons," it continues, "are still living who in their younger days have undergone the ceremony, always, they say, attended with complete success. On execution days at Northampton, numbers of sufferers used to congregate round the gallows, in order to receive the 'dead-stroke,' as it is termed. At the last execution which took place in that town, a very few only were operated upon, not so much in consequence of decrease of faith, as from the higher fee demanded by the hangman." The book does not state the date of what is spoken of in the above passage as the last execution.

"*Fellow-Townsmen*" is concerned with Bridport and its neighbouring seaside place, Bridport Quay or West Bay. Mr. Hardy very picturesquely opens this story with the statement that "the shepherd on the east hill could shout out lambing intelligence to

the shepherd on the west hill, over the intervening town chimneys, without great inconvenience to his voice, so nearly did the steep pastures encroach upon the burghers' back yards. And at night it was possible to stand in the very midst of the town and hear from their native paddocks on the lower levels of greensward the mild lowing of the farmer's heifers, and the profound, warm blowings of breath in which those creatures indulge. But the community which had jammed itself in the valley thus flanked formed a veritable town, with a real mayor and corporation, and a staple manufacture."

It is perhaps just as well to warn the visitor, in order to avoid disappointment, that the cleft in which the town is lodged, is not quite so exiguous as would be gathered from the above description, and that the shepherd who is spoken of would certainly require a voice of abnormal power if he were to wish to communicate with his fellow on the opposite side of the town about lambing or other intelligence. But here, again, the remark made at the commencement of this book, that Mr. Hardy is a writer of romances and not of guide-books, may well be borne in mind. Only he has accustomed the observer by this time to rely so completely upon his accuracy, that one is almost startled to find him availing himself of that amount of licence which we should look for in any other writer.

"*Interlopers at the Knap*" deals with a district bordering upon that of "The Woodlanders," the

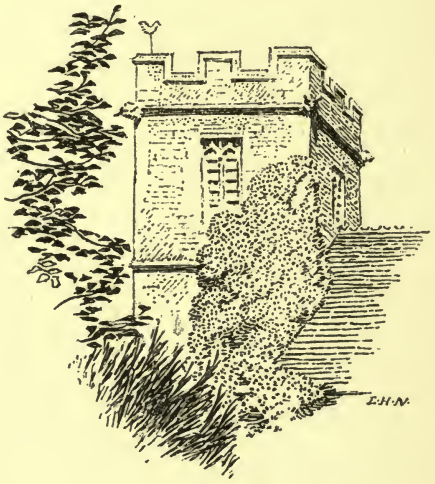
village in question being that of Melbury Osmund, from which, as stated above, so many of the details of Little Hintock were taken. Long Ash Lane, along which Darton and his friend rode, is the name of the highway from Dorchester to Yeovil.

"*The Distracted Preacher*" dwelt and ministered at Owermoigne, a little off the road between Dorchester and Wareham, and the exploits of his flock took place between that spot and the adjacent coast-line.

The two principal spots at which attempts were made to run illicit cargoes were Lulworth and Ringstead, and the other places mentioned in the course of the tale, such as Warmwell, Chaldon, and the like, appear under their proper titles, and can easily be found on the map by those who wish to follow the nightly paths of the fascinating Mrs. Lizzie Newberry. That her opinions and those of the other villagers on the subject of smuggling were not peculiar, cannot for a moment be doubted by any person at all conversant with the state of affairs in the early part of the last century. Roberts tells us that before smuggling received its death-blow, parts of Devon and Dorset were as much concerned with that business as some counties with any particular trade, and that the population of whole villages supported themselves by what was then called "Free Trade." It was an occupation in which neither the smugglers nor their customers saw the least sin; nor, indeed, strictly speaking, was there any, since such

guilt as attached to the transaction was entirely law-made.

Roberts narrates the history of an eminent smuggler who, more fortunate than Owlett, ended his days in wealth and peace. This worthy, whose name was Gulliver, kept forty or fifty men constantly



NETHER MYNTON.

employed, who were called the "white wigs" from a kind of livery of smock frocks and powdered hair which they wore. As an instance of their daring defiance of the law, there used to be shown near Lyme, a cavern where the "white wigs" sat and took their refreshment until the next turn of duty arose, which cavern was not more than one

hundred yards from the then existing custom-house, and must have been perfectly well known to its officials.

Crowe, the author of the "admired" poem of "Lewesdon Hill," has a lengthy and sententious passage on smuggling *apropos* of Burton Cliff, east of Bridport Harbour, a favourite spot for warning sentinels to be posted for the purpose of "burning off" a smuggling vessel if danger was feared. His passage is too long to be quoted *in extenso*, but a few lines may be given as a pendant to the tale of Owlett and Co. He describes the smuggling vessel as—

> "The stealth-approaching vessel, homeward bound
> From Havre or the Norman Isles, with freight
> Of wines and hotter drinks, the trash of France,
> Forbidden merchandise. Such fraud to quell
> Many a light skiff and well-appointed sloop
> Lies hovering near the coast, or hid behind
> Some curved promontory, in hope to seize
> These contraband: vain hope! on that high shore
> Stationed, th' associates of their lawless trade
> Keep watch, and to their fellows off at sea
> Give the known signal; they with fearful haste
> Observant, put about the ship, and plunge
> Into concealing darkness."

This is indeed "the right butterwoman's rank to market," and cries for an apology for its introduction—an apology which must consist in the statement that it is really interesting to see the kind of stuff which our forefathers, and some of them not the least amongst the children of men in their day, looked upon as poetry to be admired and imitated.

DOLE'S ASH FARM.

CHAPTER XX

THE NOVELS

"A Group of Noble Dames"—"Life's Little Ironies"—"Some Crusted Characters"—"Tess of the D'Urbervilles"—"Jude the Obscure"—"The Well-Beloved"—"The Wessex Poems."

THE "GROUP OF NOBLE DAMES" is made up of stories, the leading incidents in which are in many, perhaps in most, cases historical, and the topographical indications are perfectly clear. The occurrences on which the tales have been founded have been mentioned in earlier chapters, so that it will here only be necessary briefly to enumerate the places with which the stories are connected, in those cases where the indications are sufficient to warrant an indication.

In "*The First Countess of Wessex*" the scene is laid at Melbury Sampford House, near Evershot,

MARYGREEN—THE CHURCH.

and Squire Dornell's house of Falls is at Mells, in Somersetshire.

The three houses of Wimborne St. Giles, Farrs, and Canford Manor, associated with the tale of "*Barbara of the House of Grebe*," are all in the neighbourhood of Wimborne, and have been described in Chapter XVII., where also Horton Inn, mentioned in the tale, has been alluded to.

"*Lady Mottisfont*" consented to accept that title within Winchester Cathedral, a place which Mr. Hardy describes as particularly fitted for contemplative or amatory exercises. "There you have a cathedral with a nave so long that it affords space in which to walk and summon your remoter moods without continually turning on your heel, or seeming to do more than take an afternoon stroll under cover from the rain or sun. In an uninterrupted course of nearly three hundred steps eastward, and again nearly three hundred steps westward, amid those magnificent tombs, you can, for instance, compare in the most leisurely way the dry dustiness which ultimately pervades the persons of kings and bishops with the damper dustiness that is usually the final shape of commoners, curates, and others who take their last rest out-of-doors. Then, if you are in love, you can, by sauntering in the chapels and behind the episcopal chantries with the bright-eyed one, so steep and mellow your ecstasy in the solemnities around, that it will assume a rarer and finer tincture, even more grateful to the understanding, if not to the

senses, than that form of the emotion which arises from such companionship in spots where all is life, and growth, and fecundity."

"*Anna, Lady Baxby*" is in large measure a true tale about Sherborne Castle, whilst "*Lady Penelope*" was also a real person, and lived at Wolfeton Hall, near Dorchester.

"*The Honourable Laura's*" elopement took place somewhere on the north coast of Devon, probably near Ilfracombe, and the place at which she had been privately married was Taunton, called Toneborough in the tale.

"Life's Little Ironies." Part of the story of "*A Son's Veto*" takes place at Gaymead, by which is meant a village near Reading (Aldbrickham); but it is improbable that Mr. Hardy had any special place in his mind when writing about it here, or in "Jude the Obscure," where it is again alluded to. The remaining portion of the book is occupied with London.

Millbourne, the unhappy hero of "*For Conscience Sake*," lived originally in Taunton, sought out again his early love in Exeter, and finally settled his newly acquired family in the neighbourhood of Yeovil, where the young clergyman, his daughter's lover, was a curate.

The "*Tragedy of Two Ambitions*" is a Somerset tale, all the places mentioned in it, with the exception of Bournemouth, where Rosa was at school, belonging to that county. Joshua was being educated at

MELCHESTER—THE MARKET-PLACE.

Wells Theological College, when visited by his father and mother-in-law, and, after his ordination, his parish was at Coker.

Salisbury is the scene of "*On the Western Circuit*," and Poole that of "*To Please his Wife*." The incidents of the flight and execution of "*The Melancholy Hussar*" took place at Bincombe, close to Weymouth, and those of "*A Tradition of* 1804" at Lulworth. "*The Fiddler of the Reels*" is first heard of at Mellstock, and afterwards at Tincleton, on Egdon Heath, the Stickleford of the novels, reached by way of Heedless William's Pool and the Quiet Woman.

The tales told by the "CRUSTED CHARACTERS" are associated with the villages of Puddlehinton and Puddletrenthide, to which the carrier was conveying the tellers from Dorchester market. Along the same road Tony Keyte, the hero of the first of the tales, pursued his amatory way. The Hardcomes, in the next tale, visited Weymouth ; two of them there took boat, and were never heard of more until their dead bodies, locked in one another's arms, were washed ashore at Lulworth Cove. Parson Billy Toogood's name covers the personality of a well-known fox-hunting parson, whose exploits and whose friendship with George IV., when Prince Regent, supply an abundance of stories to the *chronique scandaleuse* of the county. The line of the run which he had with the hounds, whilst the drunken Andrey Satchell and his unfortunate would-be bride were locked up in the church tower, was over the Ridgeway, near

Waterston, to Yellowham Wood. The absent-minded choir disgraced themselves in Longpuddle Church, but which of the edifices in that imaginary village combined of two real places, Puddlehinton and Puddletrenthide, this may have been, I do not know. Georgy Crookhill set out from Salisbury, met the gentlemanly looking young farmer on the top of Coombe Bissett Hill, drank with him at the old Woodyates Inn, now no longer a hostelry, and shared, unfortunately for himself, a room with him at Boveridge.

"Tess of the D'Urbervilles" shares with "Jude the Obscure" the position of having the most complex and at the same time the most faithful topographical indications. The first part of the story is connected with the lovely vale of Blackmore, nearly as dear to Mr. Hardy's heart as it was to that of its nursling, William Barnes. At the commencement of the narrative we find old Durbeyfield walking through this vale, from Shaftesbury to Marnhull, where his house was situated. The death of the horse, which directly led to all poor Tess's other misfortunes, took place in one of the lanes between Marnhull and Sturminster Newton. After this event Tess went to a house near Boveridge to see the pseudo D'Urbervilles, and finally settled down there as hen-wife. She visited Cranbourne, and was ruined by Alec in the woods of the neighbouring Chase. After the death of her child, she was engaged as dairymaid at Talbothays, which may be taken to

mean Norris Mill, on the road to Tincleton (see p. 120). Here her courtship by Angel Clare, the carrying of the girls over the stream on their way to Mellstock Church, the drive to Wool Station with the milk, and finally Tess's marriage, took place. For their honeymoon they went to the Turberville manor-house, close to Woolbridge, in order that Angel might pick up some information about milling at Bindon Mill. At Bindon Abbey the episode of the laying of Tess in the abbot's grave took place, and visitors will note that for the purposes of the tale Bindon and Woolbridge have been placed closer to one another than they actually are. After her heartless desertion by Angel, she took service for a time at a dairy near Bridport, and still later at Dole's Ash Farm on the downs above Puddletrenthide. Whilst there she made that memorable excursion to Beaminster to see its rector, Clare's father. Her path lay north of the Minternes and High Stoy, over Batcombe Down and by the Cross-in-Hand which stands on its summit, across Long Ash Lane, and through Benville Lane to the town which was her destination. She returned along the same path, passing on each occasion through Evershot village. After leaving Dole's Ash she went with her family to Bere Regis, where the ancestors of her family lay lapped in lead in their great vault. Thence, yielding to the importunities of Alec, she accompanied him to Bournemouth, where her meeting with Angel and the

murder of her seducer took place. The flight of the reunited husband and wife took them through the New Forest, where they made use for a time of an empty house, thence to Salisbury and Stonehenge, where the arrest of Tess took place. The last scene of all occurred at Winchester, whence Angel and Liza-Lu ascended the West Hill from which they saw in the valley beneath "the city they had just left, its more prominent buildings showing as in an isometric drawing—among them the broad cathedral tower, with its Norman windows and immense length of aisle and nave, the spires of St. Thomas's, the pinnacled tower of the college, and, more to the right, the tower and gables of the ancient hospice, where to this day the pilgrim may receive his dole of bread and ale. Behind the city swept the rotund upland of St. Catherine's Hill; further off, landscape beyond landscape, till the horizon was lost in the radiance of the sun hanging above it." From this point they were able to watch the tower of the prison, and see the rising of the black flag which told them that the story of Tess of the D'Urbervilles was finished.

"Jude the Obscure" is also a highly topographical novel, and centres round a district far removed from any yet considered in this book. Jude himself was born at Mellstock, where so many Wessex incidents happen, but at the commencement of the tale he is living with a relative at Fawley Magna, in the Berkshire Downs. This spot is most easily reached from Wantage, the Alfredston of the tale—a bright,

SHASTON—OLD GROVE'S HOUSE.

clean, uninteresting place, over which there is no necessity for one to delay.

If we take the road thence which leads up the downs and past the workhouse, at the summit of the hill will be found that ancient highway constructed by, or at least attributed, *ab immemorabili*, to the warriors of the Iceni, which is known to antiquarians as the Icknield Way, and to the neighbouring country-side as the Green Road. Turning round at this point, one should notice the magnificent view of the Vale of White Horse stretching away in the distance.

On the left, looking backwards towards Wantage, is a house and a large barn. This is the Red House, called the Brown House in the tale, from the summit of which Jude used to strain his eyes for a sight of Oxford and its towers. "Not a soul was visible on the hedgeless highway, or on either side of it, and the white road seemed to ascend and diminish till it joined the sky. At the very top it was crossed at right angles by a green 'ridgeway'—the Icknield Street and original Roman road through the district. This ancient track ran east and west for many miles, and down almost to within living memory had been used for driving flocks and herds to fairs and markets. But it was now neglected and overgrown. . . . Not far from the road stood a weather-beaten old barn of reddish-gray brick and tile. It was known as the Brown House by the people of the locality."

Keeping on down the main road into the valley south of the ridge, a ruined cottage is reached,* which was occupied by Jude and Arabella after their marriage. By the side of this cottage is a track leading into a field easily recognizable as that in which Jude was placed to frighten away the rooks

THE BROWN HOUSE.

from the corn. This is "the vast concave," the "wide and lonely depression in the general level of the upland which was sown as a corn-field," where "the brown surface of the field went right up towards the sky all round, where it was lost by degrees in the mist that shut out the actual verge

* Since these lines were written this cottage has been pulled down, nothing but the foundations, surrounded by a hedge and some pine trees, now remaining.

and accentuated the solitude," where "the fresh harrow-lines seemed to stretch like channellings in a piece of new corduroy, lending a meanly utilitarian air to the expanse, taking away its gradations, and depriving it of all history beyond that of the few recent months."

Beyond this field the tiny village of Fawley is reached, and will be found most accurately to correspond with the description given of Marygreen in the tale.

"It was as old-fashioned as it was small, and it rested in the lap of an undulating upland adjoining the North Wessex Downs. Old as it was, however, the well-shaft was probably the only relic of the local history that remained absolutely unchanged. Many of the thatched and dormered dwelling-houses had been pulled down of late years, and many trees felled on the green. Above all, the original church, hump-backed, wood-turreted, and quaintly hipped, had been taken down, and either cracked up into heaps of road-metal in the lane, or utilized as pig-sty walls, garden-seats, guard-stones to fences, and rockeries in the flower-beds of the neighbourhood. In place of it a tall new building of German-Gothic design, unfamiliar to English eyes, had been erected on a new piece of ground by a certain obliterator of historic records who had run down from London and back in a day. The site, whereon so long had stood the ancient temple to the Christian divinities, was not even recorded on the green and level grass-

plot that had immemorially been the churchyard, the obliterated graves being commemorated by nine-penny cast-iron crosses warranted to last five years."

After his marriage with Arabella had proved a failure, Jude goes to Oxford (Christminster), and there he sees, with waking eyes, that wonderfully described vision in the night-darkened streets.

"There were poets abroad, of early date and of late, from the friend and eulogist of Shakespeare down to him who has recently passed into silence, and that musical one of the tribe who is still among us. Speculative philosophers passed along, not always with wrinkled foreheads and hoary hair as in framed portraits, but pink-faced, slim, and active as in youth; modern divines sheeted in their surplices, among whom the most real to Jude Fawley were the founders of the religious school called Tractarian; the well-known three, the enthusiast, the poet, and the formularist, the echoes of whose teaching had influenced him even in his obscure home. A start of aversion appeared in his fancy to move them at sight of those other sons of the place—the form in the full-bottomed wig, statesman, rake, reasoner, and sceptic; the smoothly shaven historian so ironically civil to Christianity; with others of the same incredulous temper, who knew each quad as well as the faithful, and took equal freedom in haunting its cloisters."

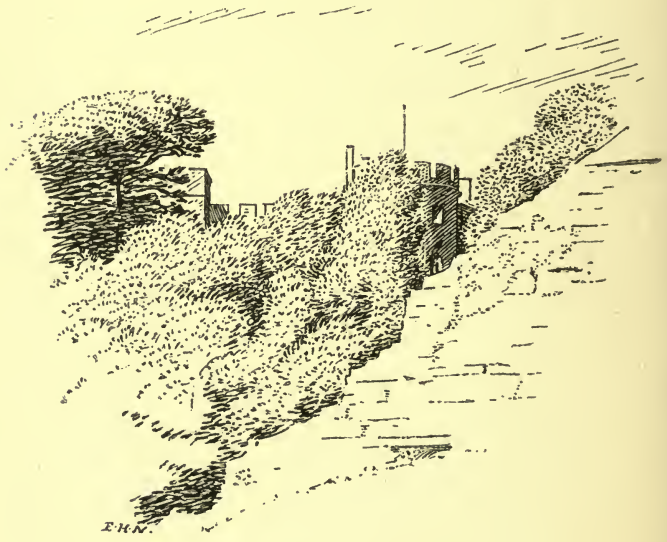
At Oxford Jude makes the acquaintance of Sue, and rediscovers Phillotson, his old schoolmaster.

Later he moves to Salisbury as a stonemason, following in the track of Sue, who had gone there to the Training College. On one of her holidays he takes her to see Wardour Castle.

After her marriage with Phillotson, she goes to Shaftesbury, where her husband had a school, his friend being master at Gillingham close by. After Sue and Phillotson have separated, she and Jude live for some time at Reading, where, by the way, Arabella had once officiated as a barmaid. They afterwards visit Basingstoke, the Stoke-Barehills of the tale, "an old town of nine or ten thousand souls. It stands with its gaunt, unattractive, ancient church, and its new red-brick suburb, amid the open, chalk-soiled cornlands near the middle of the imaginary triangle, which has for its three corners the towns of Aldbrickham and Wintoncester, and the important military station of Quartershot." Then we hear of the couple wandering all over Wessex. "Sometimes he might have been found shaping the mullions of a country mansion, sometimes setting the parapet of a town-hall, sometimes ashlaring a hotel at Sandbourne, sometimes a museum at Casterbridge, sometimes as far down as Exonbury, sometimes at Stoke-Barehills." From these wanderings he returns again to Oxford, where the catastrophe of the children's death happens, after which Sue returns to Phillotson, now once more schoolmaster at Fawley. In that tawdry modern church, hidden in the downs, Sue and Jude have their last bitter

parting, after which he returns to Oxford and his death, and she to the living martyrdom of wedlock with Phillotson.

Those readers of the present pages who may happen to penetrate to Fawley may well ask themselves what induced Mr. Hardy to select such an



SYLVANIA CASTLE.

out-of-the-way spot as the scene of his tale, and indeed to wonder how he ever came to hear of the place. Such inquirers may be glad to have the mystery cleared up by learning that Mr. Hardy's grandmother belonged to Fawley, a fact which fully

explains his visiting it, and, once visited, it certainly looks like the kind of place which ought to have a story connected with it.

"The Well-Beloved" is almost entirely associated with the Isle of Portland, though part of the action of the story takes place in London; and instances of the bewildering behaviour of the phantom of Jocelyn Pierston's affections are narrated as having taken place at Weymouth.

The "Poems" are very highly topographical, as the reader of the earlier pages of this book will have already concluded. As the indications therein are easily to be made out from the earlier chapters, many of the passages in the poems having there been cited, it is not necessary to occupy space here by systematically reviewing each piece and explaining the localities with which it deals.

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